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THE

INDEPENDENT

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Vickers director our man in Saudi

Embarrassment for Tories after exile of dissident

RUSSELL HOTTEN and COLIN BROWN

Andrew Green, the newly appointed British ambassador to Saudi Arabia, is a non-executive director at Vickers, the defence company bidding for a huge tank contract with Riyadh, it emerged yesterday.

The revelation will embarrass the Government in the wake of the expulsion this week of the leading Saudi dissident Mohammed al Masari. Vickers admitted on Thursday that it had warned the Government in recent months of the threat to trade with Saudi Arabia posed by Mr Masari, the principal London-based opponent of the Saudi royal family.

Meanwhile, the chairman of a powerful public watchdog committee said yesterday that he was ready to investigate claims that the Caribbean island of Dominica - a former British colony - will receive increased

from the company when he took up his post in Riyadh later this year, Vickers said last night. A Vickers spokesman said Mr Green was offered a position in the company to gain commercial experience. "His input is valuable but he takes no part in the day-to-day running of any of our businesses. There is no conflict of interest."

As the row over the dissident's expulsion from Britain intensified, Robert Sheldon, the Labour chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, criticised the Government for bowing to Saudi pressure and gave a clear signal that his committee would be ready to step in.

"It is quite likely that if a member of the committee asked me to investigate, I will have to go into this further," he said. "It is not just the money side. It is the fact that we can be pressured by another country putting the squeeze on us. We have never had it before. Once you start doing that, you are up for grabs."

Alan Williams, a Labour member of the committee, said earlier that he was calling for an inquiry. He has written to the Comptroller and Auditor General asking him to investigate whether money voted by Parliament for foreign aid was being spent properly. Aid to Dominica will be increased this year from £500,000 to £2m - a 300 per cent increase.

Mr Masari, leader of the Committee for the Defence of Legitimate Rights (CDLR), and a long-standing thorn in the side of the Saudi royal family, has been given 10 days to lodge an appeal or face expulsion from Britain to Dominica. The tiny island's decision to offer the dissident an alternative place of exile made it legally possible for Britain to take this step.

The Home Secretary, Michael Howard, confirmed yesterday that commercial considerations played a part in the deportation. "If there are two ways in which we can comply with our international obligations [on human rights], one of which damages our national interest and the prospects of jobs in Britain, and one way which doesn't, we are perfectly entitled to choose the way which doesn't damage our interests," he told the *Independent* during a visit to New Delhi.

Bowing to pressure, page 9



Expelled: Mr Masari

British aid in return for offering exile to Mr Masari.

Mr Green, a veteran Foreign Office Middle East expert, has been a non-executive director of a Vickers subsidiary - Vickers Defence Systems - since April 1994. Vickers, the industrial giant that owns Rolls-Royce cars, is in line for a huge Saudi order for up to 200 Challenger II tanks.

The company emphasised yesterday that Mr Green had no executive role on the main board of the company. He had joined Vickers unpaid as part of a Government scheme to introduce civil servants to business.

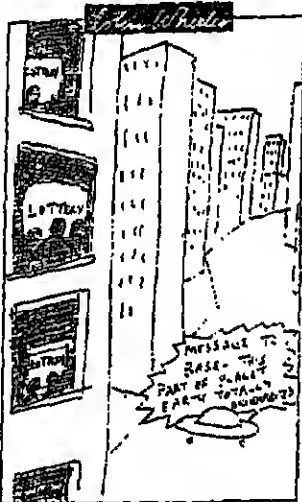
Mr Green, under-secretary of state for Middle East policy and a former Ambassador to Damascus, would be standing down



Sad farewell: Firemen grieve at the funeral yesterday of colleague Michael Mee who died trying to save a drowning girl Photograph: John Giles/PA

Lottery mania unites the nation

REBECCA FOWLER



The National Lottery jackpot swelled to £40m yesterday with tonight's draw proving the greatest national collective experience since the end of World War Two. Nearly every adult in the land, 40 million people, has bought a ticket.

The 19,000 lottery outlets across the country were inundated as queues started before dawn yesterday. Ticket sales are 70 per cent higher than usual and are expected to reach £115m compared to the week's average of £66m.

Camelot, the lottery operator, advised people to buy tickets as early as possible today.

"The response has been tremendous. It has been a frenzy with nearly every eligible adult playing," said a Camelot spokeswoman. "It's a national phenomenon. This level of jackpot is something that will not happen again for a long time."

The overall prize pool will be an estimated £73m by tonight, and Camelot estimates there will be a total of two million winners of prizes at all levels. Statistically the jackpot is likely to be won by between six and nine people. Many were playing in syndicates this week in an attempt to maximise their chances of a win.

The queue at Lombard Street Post Office in the City of

London, which has one of the highest turnovers of tickets from City syndicates, began before the doors opened yesterday. One customer made a single purchase of £2,000.

"We have a 100 per cent increase in sales and it's a lottery fever with the queue going out of the door onto the street. We've tried to persuade people to go to another office but the word in the City is that our terminal is lucky," said Jean Barnett, the manager.

Even tourists were seizing the chance to become millionaires. A number of French and Belgian travellers had specifically come to buy tickets, while others were caught up in the

mood. Janne Kaipainen, from Finland, bought a single ticket. "Everyone here is talking about it, and it's so much bigger than the Finnish lottery," he said. "If I won I'd buy houses everywhere and chase the summer around the world because in Finland it's always winter."

There was concern, however, over whether tickets being sold to Irish lottery players would be recognised. Some retailers in the republic were buying blocks of tickets in Northern Ireland. A Camelot spokeswoman said if there was any evidence a ticket had been sold on it would not pay out the prize.

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COUPON INSIDE

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Mental patient freed to kill

JASON BENNETTO and NICHOLAS TIMMINS

Independent inquiries were ordered yesterday into how two former mental hospital patients were left without supervision - allowing them to kill three people and seriously injure four others in separate assaults - amid fresh condemnation of policy towards the mentally ill.

In one case, a paranoid schizophrenic absconded from home leave and went on to shoot one man dead and fatally stab a woman in a series of random attacks during six days of violence.

Wayne Hutchinson, 21, was convicted of manslaughter at the Old Bailey on the grounds of diminished responsibility after a jury cleared him of two charges of murder. He was also

found guilty of wounding three people with intent and attempted murder. Hutchinson was given leave from his mental hospital despite having absconded before and being considered very aggressive and paranoid.

In the second case, Martin Mursell, 28, was jailed for life for murdering his stepfather and almost killing his mother, despite her pleas to social and health services for help.

The twin convictions brought renewed condemnation from mental health charities over care of the mentally ill.

Marjorie Hutchinson, chief executive of SANE, said: "The people who should really be on trial are the health and social services for failing people with serious mental illness. Mistakes

are happening all the time, where people are allowed to leave hospitals and abscond, and they are being put in the community largely because of a lack of psychiatric beds."

John Bevan, prosecuting in the Mursell case, said those in a position to help the family had failed to do so. "As a result, the defendant's stepfather is dead and his mother very nearly died."

Mary Collins, Mursell's mother, wept as she described trying to convince social services that her son, who had a history of admission to mental hospitals, was ill and needed help. A week before the killing, social services said they could not help because he was "uncooperative". "He was ill, not uncooperative," Mrs Collins said.

Camden and Islington Health Authority announced an independent inquiry as the agencies most closely involved in Mursell's care apologised to the family.

Islington Social Services said it had known Mr Mursell "for many years" while Camden and Islington Community NHS Trust said it had "a long history" of contact with the family.

In the Hutchinson case, an inquiry is to be held into the actions of the hospital and health trust involved in his release. The investigation will examine why he was released and why he was allowed to remain free for more than eight weeks.

The court was told that a locum doctor, who was not named, allowed Hutchinson home leave.

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IN BRIEF

Bashful British women

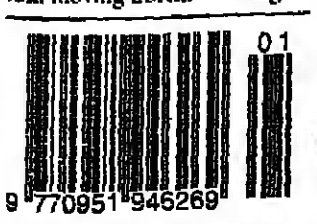
British women's opportunities in international business could be limited because they are too shy. Page 5

Japanese PM quits

The Japanese Prime Minister, Tomiichi Murayama, resigned suddenly. Page 10

Today's weather

Windy across the UK, with rain moving north. Page 2



Woman found alive in hospital bodybag

STEVE BOGGAN

A woman pronounced dead and placed in a bodybag was found to be alive by mortuary workers as they prepared to put her into a refrigerator.

Daphne Banks, 61, was last night recovering in the hospital at which she arrived as a "corpse" on New Year's Day. She had been taken to the mortuary by undertakers, but when her bodybag was unzipped, astonished staff saw that she was still breathing.

A GP had pronounced Mrs Banks, of Stonely, Cambridgeshire, dead at her farmhouse home and had called police because he believed a

post mortem examination would be necessary. Neither the police nor the undertakers who took Mrs Banks to the Hinchbrook Hospital in Huntingdon noticed that she was breathing. Once mortuary workers discovered she was alive, they alerted doctors and Mrs Banks was rushed to the intensive care unit.

Margaret Markey, a spokeswoman for the hospital, said there were no plans for an inquiry because no breaches of procedure had taken place there. However, the Cambridge and Huntingdon Health Commission said it had not ruled out an investigation.

Ms Markey said: "I can con-

fess that a body brought into the mortuary was found to have signs of life. The person had been pronounced dead by a GP before arriving at the hospital."

"It was brought in by undertakers for normal processing. When signs of life were detected, our mortuary worker did the right thing and called our emergency crash team. They carried out resuscitation and took the patient first to the Accident and Emergency Department and then to the intensive care unit. The person has now been moved to a general ward from intensive care and is making satisfactory progress."

Ms Markey said the "body" had been put on a metal stretch-

er by undertakers and was in a bodybag or shroud. Asked whether the next port of call for Mrs Banks would have been a refrigerator, she replied: "That would be a fair assumption."

Cambridgeshire police said they had been called to a "sudden death" at Mrs Banks' home at 1.39pm. The doctor, who has not been named, had pronounced the patient dead, but would not issue a death certificate, so officers had to take certain details to pass on to the coroner. "If a doctor has pronounced a patient dead, police officers are not going to argue and try to find a pulse," a spokesman said.

The undertakers, Cobbolds,

of Hail Weston, Cambs, refused to discuss the incident, saying they were under contract to the area coroner. David Morris, and were not allowed to explain the circumstances.

Mrs Banks' husband, Claude, a farmer, was at the hospital yesterday but he declined to comment.

A family friend of the Banks said yesterday: "Unfortunately everything was not happy at home and the family is obviously extremely distressed by what has happened. Most friends and family know what happened, but it is so delicate no-one is talking about it. We will have to see if Mr Banks wants to complain about it."

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A similar arrangement is currently under way with the Treasury building on Parliament Street, opposite the Houses of Parliament. Full bids for the Treasury from two consortia are due to be submitted by the end of this month, with a decision expected by the end of March.

The funerals were held yesterday of the two men who died trying to save the life of 11-year-old Tracey Pattison after she fell through ice last week at Hemsworth Water Park, West Yorkshire. Mick Mee, 48, a fireman, was buried with full brigade honours in his home village of South Hindley, near Barnsley. Jack Crawshaw, 51, of Wakefield, was laid to rest in a private cremation service attended by more than 100 family members and friends.

killed her. Hutchinson was arrested hours later after the shop owner, Tressel Foster, led police to his home. Mr Foster was later shot dead as he sat in his car. Other witnesses in the case received death threats.

Mr Dykes said his proposal for a cross-party alliance was re-

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Blood on the floor at the Stock Exchange: how boardroom coup led to the sack of a reformer

John Willcock traces the conflict that opened a rift in one of the City's great institutions

When Michael Lawrence, chief executive of the Stock Exchange, woke up in his spacious detached house in Berkshire on Thursday, he had no inkling that this was to be a day that would change his life and provoke bitter accusations of skulduggery and in-fighting in the boardroom of one of the City's key institutions.

He prepared for the regular board meeting, which was scheduled for 11am. Thirty minutes before the 17 members of the 20-man board were to gather on the 23rd floor of the Stock Exchange tower in Leadenhall Street, Lawrence was informed that there was to be a vote on whether he should be sacked as chief executive.

The meeting was opened by the Exchange chairman, John Kemp-Welch, a rotund man and the embodiment of blue-blooded City establishment. What followed had reverberations way beyond the confines of this boardroom and would effect the way shares are traded in London, and its position as a global financial centre.

Mr Kemp-Welch invited Mr Lawrence to rebutt the criticism that he had lost the confidence of the Exchange's member firms. Mr Lawrence spoke for 10 minutes before he was asked to leave the room while a vote was taken. He never returned. The board voted by a majority to sack Mr Lawrence, just two years after his predecessor Peter Rawlings was given the push.

Mr Lawrence's "offence" was to force through far-reaching reforms which will bring the City of London's share trading practices into line with those of New York and Tokyo. The changes would weaken entrenched institutions in the City, who pre-



Michael Lawrence: He believes that to make omelettes you have to break eggs, but his reforms were what got him sacked

Photograph: Geraint Lewis

fer the old ways. The Exchange says that the proposals had nothing to do with it. Mr Kemp-Welch stated: "Michael had failed to win the confidence of member firms, both large and small, and his relationship with the board for some months had been unsatisfactory."

Mr Lawrence returned home and released a short statement: "There is a great team at the Exchange and a good programme for reform which will be rolled out in 1996. It is important that this programme goes ahead."

Mr Lawrence's reforms strike

at the heart of City methodology. Uniquely, London preserves a system of quote-driven share trading. This involves firms of market makers posting offers to buy and sell shares on an electronic bulletin board, which in turn is used by stock brokers to buy and sell shares.

Mr Lawrence helmed this system did not guarantee the best price for institutions buying and selling shares. He also believed that the market makers at the heart of the system enjoyed too many privileges.

Mr Lawrence wanted to introduce the "order driven" sys-

tem. This proposal immediately raised the hackles of the main market makers, who represent the old City establishment: BZW, Kleinwort Benson, SBC Warburg and NatWest Markets. They became Mr Lawrence's main opponents.

On 13 November, Mr Lawrence issued a series of measures aimed at introducing the "order driven" system; buyers would put in an order and the seller would then quote a price for the shares.

This was the last straw for the market makers, who made insistent threats that he should

drop the reforms, or else they would get rid of him, despite the fact he had the support of other Exchange member firms.

This did not take Mr Lawrence by surprise. The reforms would make it easier for new competitors to enter the once-protected share trading arena, and would cost the market makers jobs and profits.

A source close to Mr Lawrence said yesterday: "It's all about control. The Exchange is in a near monopoly position, since you have to go through the market makers. Yet many firms now realise that market-making

ties up capital without giving a decent return."

Michael Lawrence is no stranger to controversy, and clearly relishes taking on some of the City's big hitters. He has stirred up opposition from colleagues he considers his intellectual inferiors. His academic credentials are impressive; a first in Physics from Exeter University followed by a PhD in Mathematical Physics at Bristol.

He started his career as an accountant with Price Waterhouse in 1969. He joined the Prudential, one of Britain's biggest in-

vestment institutions, in 1988 as finance director, and was considering retirement before joining the Stock Exchange. In the year up to last March, he earned a total of £442,000.

He can now, in the time-honoured fashion, spend more time with his family; he is married with two sons and a daughter. And he can always cruise around the Berkshire countryside in the red Aston Martin he bought from the comedian Rowan Atkinson to celebrate his appointment to the job he departed in such acrimonious circumstances this week.

Labour may tax child benefit

JUDITH JUDD
Education Editor

Labour is to consider proposals to tax child benefit to pay for education vouchers and to compel parents to attend school to discuss their child's education. David Blunkett, the party's education spokesman, promised to look at the plans put forward yesterday by Professor Michael Barber, an adviser both to Labour and the Government.

Professor Barber, of London University's Institute of Education, told the North of England education conference that child benefit should be taxed to provide £200 a year in education vouchers for the poorest 4 million four- to 18-year-olds.

The vouchers, which would be handed out at compulsory parents' evenings, would have to be used for books, computer software, extra tuition, or time at a homework centre.

Professor Barber, whose remarks provoked the anger of parents and teachers, said that parents should be given a statutory duty to attend their child's school every six months.

Mr Blunkett said: "It is vital to use every means feasible to involve parents in their children's education. We proposed home-school contracts and plans for new homework guidelines last year. Michael's other ideas are interesting and we will look further at them."

But Gillian Shephard, the Secretary of State for Education, ruled out a tax on child benefit to pay for school vouchers. She said she liked the professor's strong emphasis on the importance of parental involvement, but added: "I think taxing child benefit is an idea that he will have to sell rather hard."

And Margaret Morrissey, of the National Confederation of Parent-Teacher Associations, said that most parents were already doing what Professor Barber wants.

Lottery fever: £40m jackpot pulls in secretaries to sheep farmers

'Everyone's gone ticket crazy'

REBECCA FOWLER

Chauffeurs, secretaries and stockbrokers queued beside ticket inspectors and company directors in record numbers yesterday at Liverpool Street railway station's lottery kiosk, the busiest in Britain, to share the chance of scooping the £40m lottery jackpot.

The line of hopeful gamblers snaking into the main concourse never shrunk. The largest purchase was £1,000 for a syndicate of City office workers. "The whole thing has gone completely mental in the last few days. Sales are more than double the usual," said a spokeswoman for UK CL Retail, which runs the kiosk.

According to Tony Moss, the kiosk manager, regular players were spending an average £5-£7 on tickets compared to £2 in a normal week. "You can see there are a lot of new people playing by the way they fill out the slips, because there's an art to it," he said.

A number of pinstriped bankers and city directors were also playing the lottery this week, although most proved reluctant to admit it. "I've bought a ticket, but I don't wish to tell you my name," said one head of a management consultancy. "He's the director," hissed his assistant as they departed.

The players were divided over whether the record prize was too high. Robert Harman, 52, a chauffeur in a syndicate of 10, said: "I suppose it should be split, but if someone came up to me with £40m I wouldn't complain."

The queues were no less impressive at the other end of

Britain, in the Shetland Isles. They began before dawn at Conochies on the High Street, with customers unperturbed by the wind, rain and darkness. Tom Worthington, the manager, said sales were up more than 50 per cent and regular customers, including fishermen, oil workers and sheep farmers, were doubling their normal spend on tickets from £2 to £4.

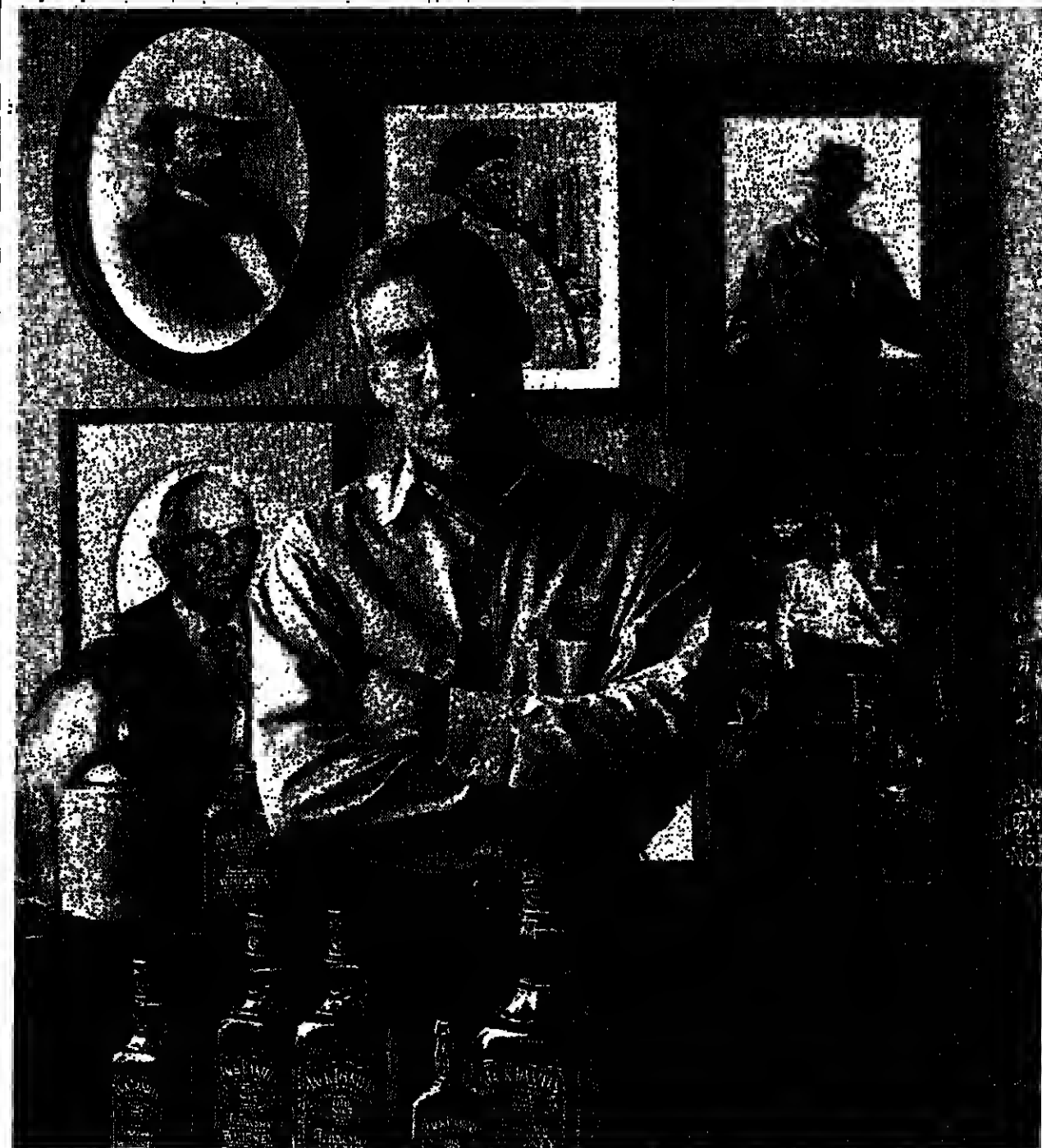
The highest prize paid out on a ticket so far at Conochies is £97,000, and Mr Worthington said the shop was ready to provide a jackpot winner, although he said it would be impossible for anyone to keep it a secret on the island.

The frenzy for tickets was intensified because the shop was closed until Tuesday because of the snow. "It's been non-stop," Mr Worthington said.

"The bottom line is, irrespective of what they say, everyone wants to win the big prize. We're not interested in the morality of it. There's a big pot and everyone wants it."



The lottery kiosk queue at Liverpool Street yesterday



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Astrology: fact or fraud?

news

Underground shutdown: Passengers in London facing 18 months of disruption to allow urgent repair work on crumbling tunnels

Line closures nightmare for Tube travellers

JAMES CUSICK

Eighteen months of line closures and disruption on London's underground network to allow crucial engineering repair work was announced yesterday by London Transport.

The scale of the disruption, and the level of chaos it will cause the 2.6 million passengers who use the system daily, brought widespread condem-

nation from user groups and opposition politicians.

The urgent repairs, costing £87m - including work on the decaying Victorian and Edwardian tunnels that carry trains beneath the Thames - will mean staggered closures from March this year until autumn 1997. The most drastic shutdown will affect the Bakerloo Line between Piccadilly Circus and Elephant and Castle in

south London. This section will be closed for eight months from the end of the year.

Commuters using two of the capital's busiest rail termini at Charing Cross and Waterloo - home of the Eurostar Channel tunnel operation - will be particularly hard hit by the repair programme.

Labour's transport spokesman, Brian Wilson, concerned with underfunding for London

Underground, called for a full statement in the House of Commons next week. He said: "London is paying the penalty for 16 years of prejudice against the public sector. We are left with an infrastructure that cannot support services required by a modern economy."

Peter Ford, chairman of London Transport, said details of closures and alternative routes would be given out soon in spe-

cially prepared timetables. The scale of the disruption is a public relations disaster for London Underground, which raises fares tomorrow by an average of 4.5 per cent. The company insists that no more than 100,000 passengers will be affected each day.

Sources at London Underground said yesterday that there had been "decades of underfunding where repair and main-

tenance was ignored - by both ruling parties."

A spokeswoman said: "This year we will spend £414m on core maintenance work. The £80m projects represent less than a quarter."

And she added: "We could have easily spent £700m, because other parts of the system are simply crumbling." The partial shutdown was the result of a policy of "doing nothing, till

something stopped working".

The closures include: the Northern Line, Charing Cross Branch, from 30 March to 30 June this year. Tunnel strengthening work will mean no weekend service between Charing Cross and Kennington. Further work will mean closures between Camden and Kennington.

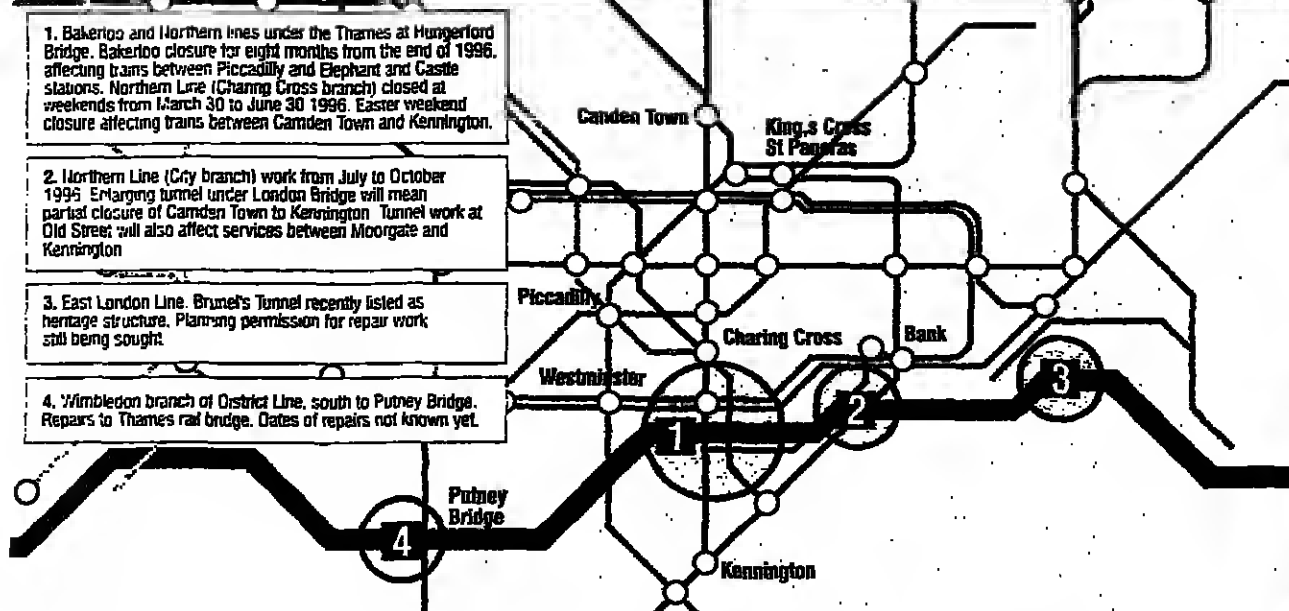
On the City Branch of the Northern Line, there will be closures from July to October this

year. On the Waterloo and City Line, there will be closures from 4 to 14 April.

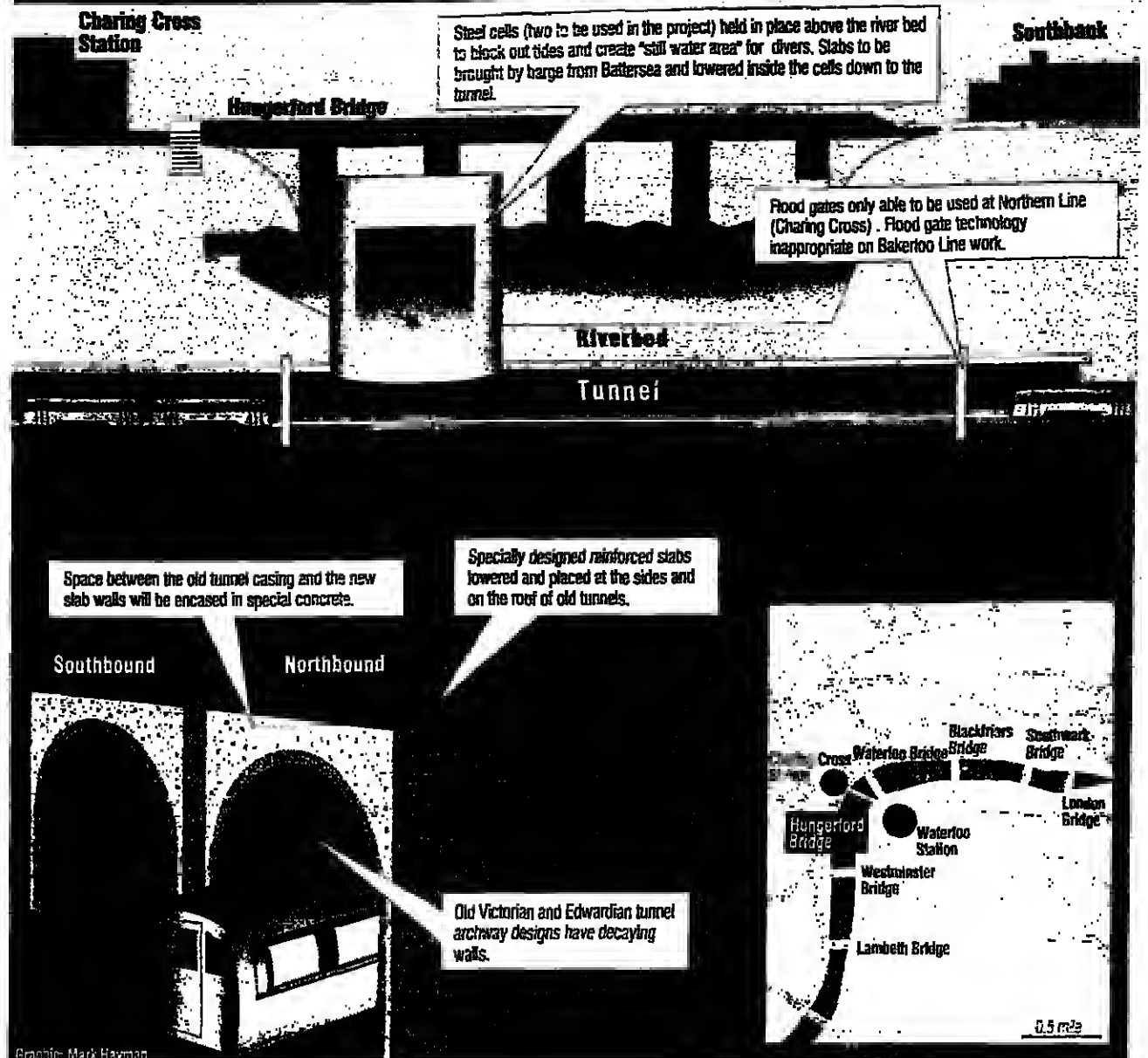
The southern section of the Bakerloo Line will be shut down for eight months from the end of this year.

Work will also be carried out on the Putney Bridge to Wimbledon services on the District Line and there may also be disruptions to the Metropolitan Line at weekends.

The main areas affected in the £87m repair project



How advanced engineering will stop the leaks



Waterworks beneath the Thames

The expertise required to upgrade and repair the decaying Victorian and Edwardian civil engineering works under the Thames will challenge anything London Underground has attempted, writes James Cusick.

Details of the tendering deal have yet to be finalised, but for the contractors who take on the job the risks involved in the £87m project will be high.

After 70 years of scouring since it opened in 1926, only a

few metres lie between the riverbed and the decaying roof of the Northern Line tunnel beneath Hungerford bridge. London Underground said it was concerned with the roof and "the whole structural integrity of the tunnel".

A few metres deeper lies the Bakerloo Line river tunnel built in 1906. The ingress of water in both tunnels was diplomatically understated by an Underground spokeswoman as "more

than we would like". Water, however, affects the whole Tube system with 3 million gallons being pumped out every day.

Another repair, when planning permission is granted, will be on Brunel's Thames tunnel. Built in 1843 and a listed structure, it "desperately needs work", engineers say. London Underground admits it has operated an "only-when-something-goes-wrong-fix-it" policy for decades. A spokeswoman said:

"Everything has an expiry date. Now the time is really up."

Preparing the subterranean river crossing for the next 100 years will involve closing off the Thames tides using two huge, open-topped steel cells to enable work to be carried out in still conditions. Divers operating inside the cells will lower reinforced slabs down on to the riverbed. The arched tunnels will then have their sides and roof encased by the slabs.

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Inflation warning over pay deals

DIANE COYLE
Economics Correspondent

Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, said yesterday that a pick-up in pay settlements would pose a threat to the prospect of future interest rate cuts. His warning came on the day that Vauxhall car workers rejected a pay offer of 4.5 per cent.

It also came shortly before the Cabinet considers the pay review bodies' recommendations on awards for 1.4 million public-sector workers. The bodies, covering teachers, doctors, dentists and nurses, the armed forces and "top salaries" for judges and mandarins, are believed to have recommended pay increases above the current 3.1 per cent inflation rate.

Mr George said there were potentially negative aspects of the outlook for inflation alongside the encouraging features. He highlighted pay deals and rapid growth of the money supply. In an interview on BBC radio, he said: "We have recently seen a few settlements - settlements which other people pay attention to - which may be justified in themselves but can be taken as a kind of lead for others where they wouldn't be justified in the same way."

He said the low level of pay rises so far, running at about 3 per cent, had been encouraging. But the motor companies have traditionally been seen as pace-setters on wages. Ford unions are preparing a strike ballot in support of a 10 per cent claim.

Vauxhall car workers yesterday rejected a three-year pay offer. Workers at its Luton and Ellesmere Port plants voted against accepting an offer of a 4.5 per cent pay rise now, followed by an increase in line with inflation over the next two years, as well as a one-hour cut in the 39-hour week.

Mr George said the Bank of England would be monitoring the situation closely, with January a particularly important month for settlements. Although prospects for the British economy were "extraordinarily favourable," he said, there was certainly a possibility that the recent quarter point cut in rates would have to be reversed within six months.

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Occupational Psychology Conference: National behaviour patterns could limit business opportunities

'Bashful Brit' women lose out in networking

Women in professional jobs conform to all the national stereotypes – bashful Brits, sociable Spaniards and assertive Americans, according to an occupational psychologist.

As business becomes more international, there is a danger it will all end in mutual misunderstanding: American women risk being dismissed as "pushy", Spanish women as "unfocused" and the British as "aloof". Cultural differences could limit the success of women outside their own country.

When they "network" with other females in similar professions with personal advancement in mind, the British tend to be stand-offish and to lack self-confidence. Carole Pemberton of the Sunridge Park Management Centre told the annual occupational psychology conference of the British Psychological Society in Eastbourne, East Sussex.

British women use networking to learn from colleagues in more senior positions. "They want to be near powerful people, but they believe they should network over much longer timescales so that people gradually discover their talent."

"They back off from the more overt pushy approach of the Americans," Ms Pemberton said.

The Brits are never quite sure when or how to follow up a social contact with a conversation about business.

When a British woman goes to the United States they may be tempted to hover on the fringes of a social gathering ex-

pecting to be noticed by someone important. She will find, however, that American colleagues will be "in there presenting themselves".

Americans see networking occasions as an "arena for trading business cards". They tend to "work the room", moving on rapidly from conversation which is unlikely to elicit employment or business opportunities. "If they don't get rapid pay-offs from belonging to a network, they're off very rapidly," Ms Pemberton said.

The Spanish, however, are more "laid back" and network to be sociable and to have fun with people they like. They not so much work the room as "expand into it", Ms Pemberton said. "Having fun seems to be the main point."

The researchers' conclusions were drawn from a study of the European Women's Management Development Network which operates in 17 countries, including the United States, and aims to promote the cause of women in business.

The organisation wanted to know whether women who held high-level posts joined and left networks for the same reasons, understood that the success of such contacts depended on the same skills and saw the same benefits in membership.

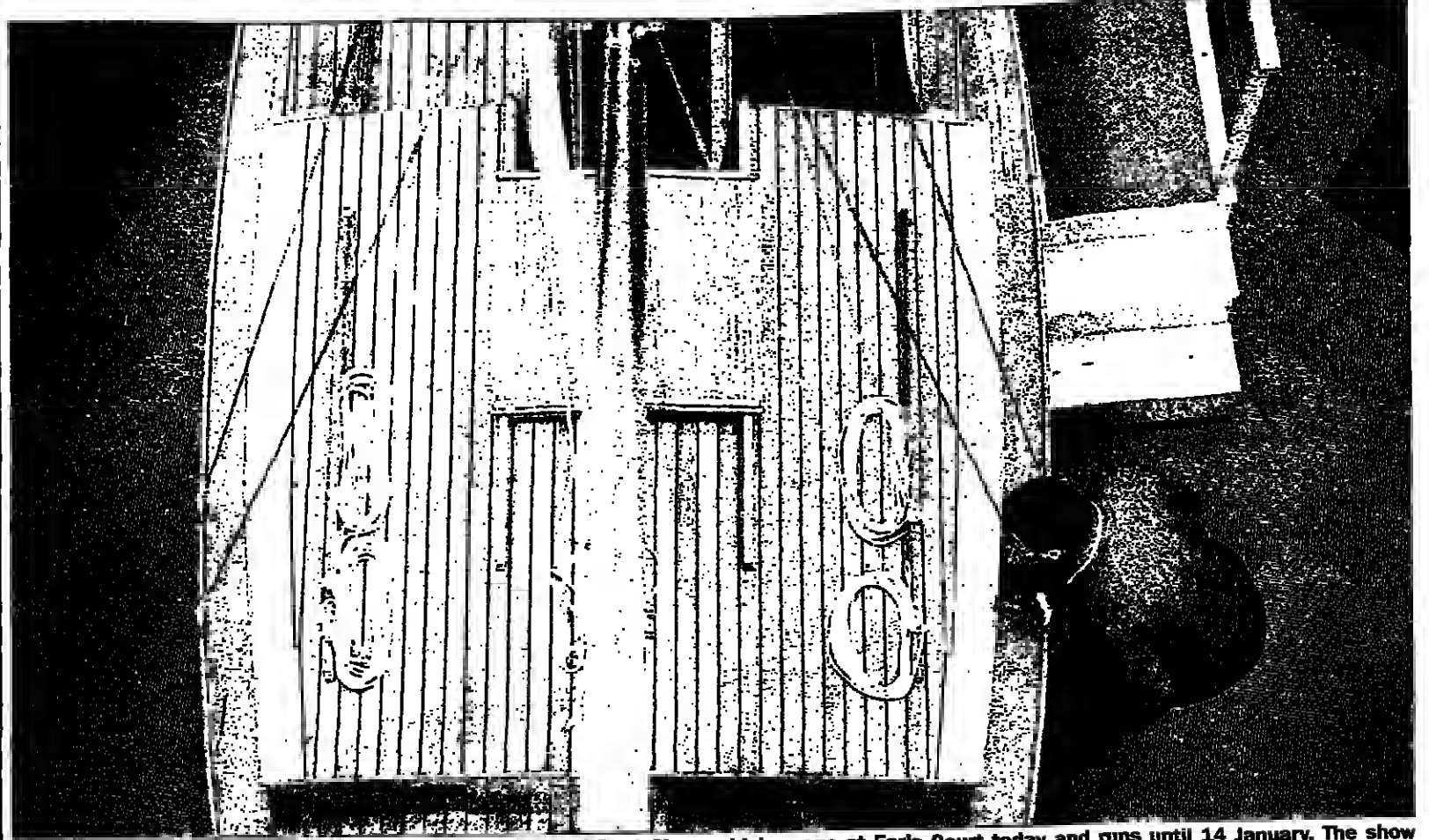
Ms Pemberton argued there was a growing danger that women who worked "outside their culture" would fail to get the support they needed from peers because their approach was misunderstood.

It was necessary for women

to establish these networks in order to compete with men who enjoyed long-established points of contact. As job markets become more fragmented, networking was an increasingly important method of securing employment, Ms Pemberton contended.

"While women sometimes belong to golf clubs, unlike men very few of them get jobs through membership," she said.

Some people were filled with dread about entering a room and introducing themselves to strangers, but it was necessary if women were ambitious.



In for the keel: A visitor to the 42nd London International Boat Show, which opens at Earls Court today and runs until 14 January. The show covers more than 14 acres of display space, taken up by more than 650 exhibitors and over 850 craft. Photograph: Tony Buckingham

Casuals 'happier' than full-timers'

Contrary to popular belief, temporary workers are happier than their full-time counterparts, according to a study by occupational psychologists, writes Barrie Clement.

Surprisingly, casual employees were more committed to the organisation, reported higher job satisfaction and better mental health, the University of Sheffield found.

In a survey of a circuit-board components manufacturer in the Midlands, full-time staff were found to feel "threatened and vulnerable" as the labour market became increasingly flexible in response to economic change.

The authors, Catriona Russell Gardner and Paul Jackson of the university's Institute of Work Psychology, conceded that the positive attitudes of casual personnel might not last if they believed they would always be on short-term contracts. Most wanted to secure full-time employment with the company.

The researchers concluded, however, that "short-term contracts undoubtedly suit some people".

The relative depression of full-timers could be explained by their feeling that their input into the organisation in terms of skill and experience was not fully rewarded compared with the earnings of temporary staff, the authors said.

Management generally assumed that permanent workers would see casual staff as a "buffer" against redundancy. Thus the "peripheral" personnel could be laid off when product demand slowed, rather than the full-timers.

But the study found that the idea of the buffer failed to make full-timers feel more secure, especially as the company had been going through a period of uncertainty.

The authors told the conference there had been a considerable rise in part-time and short-term contracts. In the UK nearly 50 per cent of employers had increased employment of part-timers between 1990 and 1992. Nearly 40 per cent of organisations reported that their use of temporary or casual work had increased over the previous three years.

Quiet funeral for Brixton riot man

IAN MacKINNON

In an emotional but calm funeral, relatives and friends yesterday buried Wayne Douglas, the man whose death in a police cell provoked rioting in Brixton, south London, last month.

The sadness at his death from heart failure was heightened as it came two weeks after the still-born birth of his baby son, Raekwon.

Yesterday, they were laid to rest in the same coffin at Streatham Park cemetery after a 30-minute service attended by about 150 mourners.

Nadine Beckford, his partner, expressed their sense of loss at the death of Mr Douglas, 25. "He was great at making a bad situation humorous," she said. "He loved life. I was looking forward to having his son. I know he would have made a good dad. He was not given enough time to make mistakes."

There was little mention of the circumstances of his death on 5 December after he was arrested for a suspected burglary, or the violence a week later. Two post mortem examinations, one carried out by an independent pathologist for the family, found death was caused by heart failure due to an existing condition.



Wayne Douglas: Died in police custody after arrest

Lee Jasper, of the National Black Caucus, speaking after the service, said witnesses to the arrest claimed Mr Douglas had been brutally beaten by police and this contributed to his death. He called for a rigorous investigation, aside from that being conducted by the Police Complaints Authority, a body which did not have the confidence of the black community.

Albert Douglas, Wayne's elder brother, said he merely wanted it to be a day for mourning. "This day is one of great sadness. There may be some anger in the community, but I can't speak for them."

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When expecting a cheque in the post, some blind people ask the sender to attach it to a piece of textured paper, like kitchen roll, so that it is not confused with a compliment slip, or thrown away by mistake.

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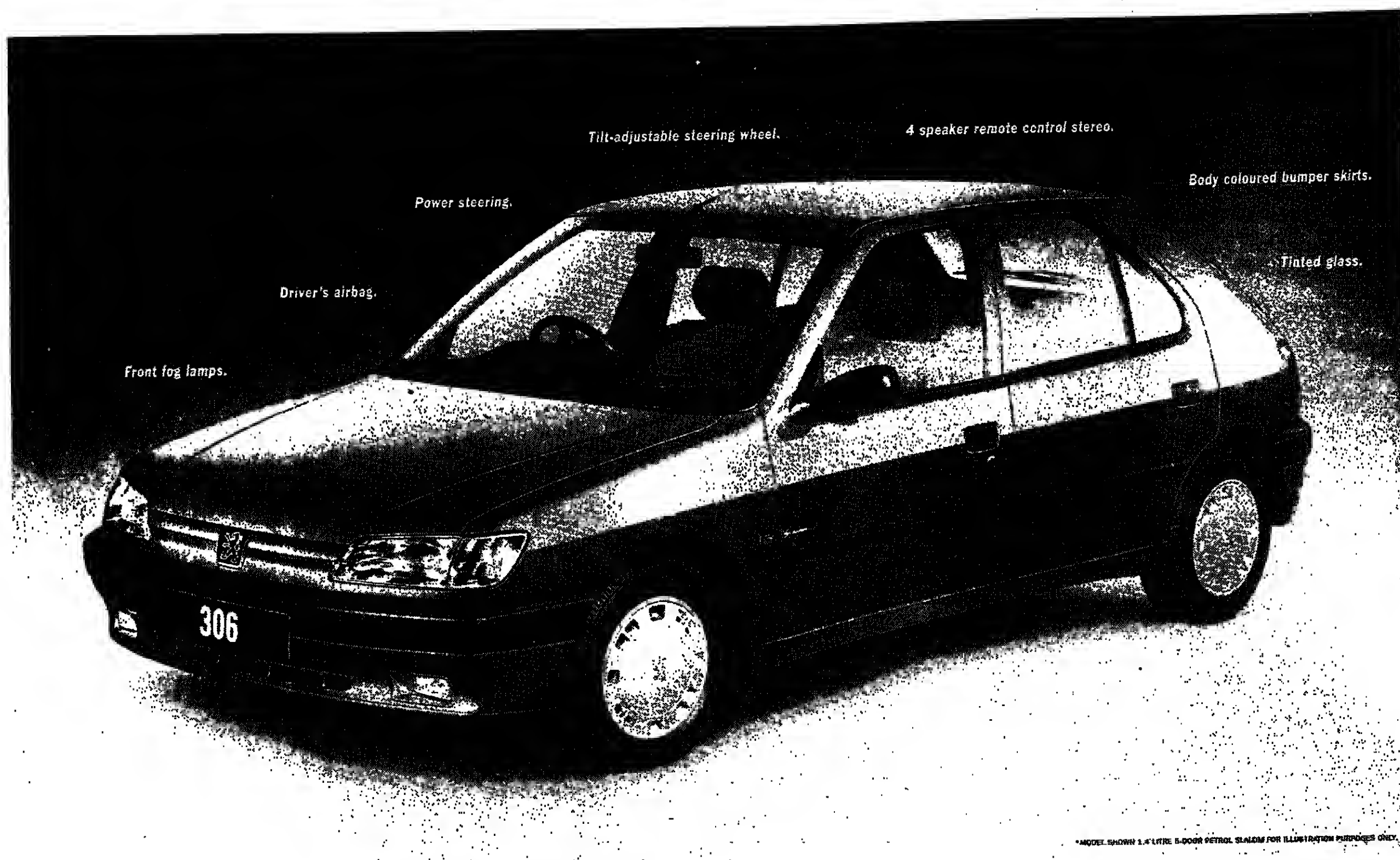


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Elephant victims of bloodlust safaris



Death trail: Sleepy the elephant bull dusting himself off (above) and enjoying happier times (right) before he and three other males were slaughtered by safari hunters

Big game hunting causes revulsion, but some conservationists defend it as a necessary evil. **Nicholas Schoon** reports

The big, white hunter is alive and well and slaughtering elephants in Africa.

Each year hundreds of wealthy people, predominantly Germans and Americans, fly out on safari looking to shoot a variety of species. The cost of their sporting holiday packages, which usually last several weeks, can top £30,000, while the government fee for shooting one elephant runs into thousands of pounds.

The continued hunting causes widespread revulsion but it is defended as a necessary evil by some wildlife conservationists. Even Kenya, a bastion against big game hunting, is now considering allowing limited elephant shooting outside national parks.

Just over a year ago four mature bull males, led by an elephant called Sleepy, wandered from Kenya a few miles across the international border into Tanzania, where hunting is legal with permits, which are available at a high price and aimed at foreign hunters.

The four were shot by an American and two Germans. Their safaris and hunting permits were obtained by a Tanzanian-based company, Northern Hunting Enterprises, and the beasts were extremely easy to shoot because they were semi-tame.

They had become used to the steady stream of camera-wielding tourists and their mini vans in Kenya's Amboseli National Park, where they had spent most of their lives.

"It was about as sporting as shooting your neighbour's poodle," said Cynthia Moss, an American zoologist who has studied the 900 elephants in Amboseli for 25 years.

Although the trade in ivory is banned under an international treaty, there is no law against the hunters taking the males' huge tusks home as trophies. They were removed using a chain-saw



Trophy piece: A hunter poses with the carcass of one of the slaughtered bull elephants

and the ears, tail and feet were also kept. The shooting of one of the elephants, 50-year-old Sabore, was video-recorded and photographed for one of the Germans, Utz Rittmeyer, a businessman. Also filmed were

the celebrations which followed and the gory taking of the trophies. The photographs and footage were obtained by a German journalist.

During the next fortnight, on Wednesday and Sunday week,

BBC 2 will be showing two programmes about the Amboseli elephants filmed over a six-year period. The first includes footage of the males before they were shot, while in the second, film-maker Martyn Colbeck

discovers the skeletons of two of them picked clean by vultures.

Permits for big game hunters to shoot elephants are granted in South Africa, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Zambia and the Central African Republic. The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) says that Tanzania allows up to 50 of its 54,000 elephants to be legally shot each year.

In some African national parks, elephant numbers have been rising thanks largely to the ivory trade ban. As the human population also increases there have been growing conflicts around the parks between the elephants and peasant farmers who see their crops destroyed by the huge mammals. In Kenya, more than 70 people a year are being killed by them.

The WWF believes that commercial sport hunting can be justified as a last resort, provided it brings income to local com-

munities, poses no threat to the elephant population and can be shown to be environmentally beneficial.

The organisation, which took the lead in fighting for the ivory ban, believes these conditions are nearest to be fulfilled in Zimbabwe where up to 250 elephants can be shot each year. If local people benefit financially from the hunting then they are given an incentive to preserve a healthy elephant population and natural habitats, rather than turning all the land over to crops and pasture.

Last summer, a Kenyan government commission set up to look into conflicts between wildlife and people recommended the resumption of hunting.

"We are going to look at this extremely seriously," responded David Weston, who took over as head of Kenya's wildlife service from the conservationist Dr Richard Leakey.

Computer makers tool up for children

CHARLES ARTHUR
Las Vegas

Parents who feel their offspring need a head start in an increasingly technological world will soon be able to buy computers designed for children aged between three and seven.

Mike Heil, a senior manager with computer company Compaq, told the Consumer Electronics show in Las Vegas: "If children are too young to learn to use high-technology products, why can they work out how to program the videotape recorder before their parents?"

The new "Wonder Tools" are produced jointly by Compaq, the world's largest PC maker, and Fisher-Price, the biggest maker of pre-school products. Designed to plug into a multimedia PC capable of playing CD-ROMs, they consist of a "steering wheel" with joystick for younger children, and simplified keyboard with improved mouse for older children learning to spell.

Both companies see huge market potential: there are already 44 million multimedia PCs in homes worldwide and this figure is expected to reach 71 million by 1999. Although there have been computer games for pre-school children in the past, they have either not run on conventional PCs, or have needed a keyboard and mouse, which younger children find difficult to operate.

Another problem is young inquisitive players deleting important files. But the children's keyboards hide special keys - notably the "Delete" key.

The products will be available in the US from this summer, costing \$150 (£98) and in the UK by Christmas 1997.

The delay in international sales, Compaq's consumer vice-president, Celeste Dunn, said, was that "culturalising" the software required more than spelling changes. "We've noticed that in Britain when a cat makes a noise in a software game, it's more of a 'meow' sound than in the US, where it's more like 'meow'. And rhymes and humour are different. And with children, if you get those sorts of things wrong, they just dismiss the product completely."



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IN BRIEF

Scandal threatens Lithuanian PM

Vilnius — The defence and foreign ministers of Lithuania resigned, saying they could no longer work with the Prime Minister, Adolfas Slezevicius, who has been implicated in a banking scandal.

Linas Linkevicius, the Defence Minister, and Povilas Gylys, the Foreign Minister, submitted their resignations to President Algirdas Brazauskas, who has not yet accepted them. The ruling Labour Democratic Party decided that Mr Slezevicius could stay on, despite revelations that he withdrew funds from his account at the country's largest private bank several days before it failed last month.

Gesture to Muslims

Algiers — In a gesture of appeasement, Algeria's President Liamine Zeroual appointed four members of moderate Muslim groups to his first new government since he was elected in November. Mr Zeroual, who retains the defence portfolio, named a new foreign minister, Ahmed Attaf, but kept the team overseeing market reforms.

Briton drops appeal

Singapore — John Martin Scripps, the Briton sentenced to death for the gruesome murder of a South African tourist last year, has dropped his appeal, to be heard on Monday. "He has written with his own hand to the prison authorities that he does not wish to pursue the appeal," said his lawyer, who added that an appeal for clemency was still possible.

Italian deadlock

Rome — Talks between the leaders of Italy's opposing blocs on ways out of the country's political impasse broke down, and Silvio Berlusconi, leader of the centre-right Freedom Alliance coalition, said prospects were growing for an early general election.

Prisoners take over

Izmir — Left-wing inmates in Turkey held guards and wardens hostage at Izmir, Ankara and Istanbul prisons to protest against the killing of three prisoners in a riot at an Istanbul jail a day earlier. Inmates at Izmir's Buca prison, a hotbed of unrest in the past year, met their lawyers and said they would end the rebellion if the justice ministry promised to improve prison conditions.

Wedded to tradition

New Delhi — Falling in love is a Western fantasy which usually evaporates before the first child is born, according to Singapore's elder statesman, Lee Kuan Yew. Speaking to Indian businessmen about the possible impact of economic liberalisation, he said Indian culture could withstand unwelcome foreign influences. Like Indians, he favoured arranged marriages, saying amid repeated applause: "I am a product of an arranged marriage."



Heartbreak house: Residents of Sulawesi, Indonesia, survey the wreckage of their home, destroyed by the aftershock of an earthquake which measured 7 on the Richter scale

Photograph: AFP

Howard bows to Saudi arms pressure

TIM MCGIRK
New Delhi

Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, indicated yesterday that the British government is expelling the Saudi dissident, Mohammed al-Masari, because his presence in Britain is jeopardising lucrative arms deals with the Saudi royal family.

"I think it's quite well known that the Saudi government was unhappy over the activities of Mr al-Masari," Mr Howard told *The Independent*. He added: "If there are two ways in which we can comply with our international obligations [on human rights], one of which damages our national interest and the prospects of jobs in Britain, and one way which doesn't, we are perfectly entitled to choose the way which doesn't damage our interests."

Mr Masari was expelled after the Saudis threatened to tear up arms contracts with British firms worth billions of pounds if the dissident stayed in Britain. A former physics professor, Mr Masari was waging a one-man battle by fax machine against the Saudi royal family, which he accused of corruption.

John Major, had twice been

asked by the Saudi government, in 1994 and in October 1995, to have Mr Masari removed from the country.

Asked if Dominica — a Caribbean island of 75,000 people whose main crop, bananas,

was destroyed last year by a hurricane — had received any incentive to take the dissident, Mr Howard replied: "I can't say anything about that. We are very grateful to Dominica for agreeing to take Masari."

Although Britain has reduced its foreign development aid overall, Dominica's was reportedly doubled to £2m this year and in 1997.

In Britain, the expulsion order was criticised by human

rights groups who accuse the Tory government of jettisoning the rights of free speech and political asylum for weapons contracts. Replying to these protests, Mr Howard said, "We intend to maintain our reputation for tolerance and free speech, but we also intend to ensure that people don't exploit and abuse these tradition characteristics of British society."

Mr Howard is pushing for the government to adopt tighter laws on immigrants seeking political asylum in Britain. Many political exiles — among them Sikhs, Kashmiris, Tamils, Iranians, and Nigerians — have sought sanctuary in Britain from hostile regimes back home. The decision to expel Mr Masari is seen by many political refugees as an alarming precedent, one that might pave the way for them to be shipped back to governments that might arrest, torture or kill them.

The Home Secretary, on a South Asian tour to seek help from Indian and Pakistani officials in stemming the flow of illegal immigrants and heroin into Britain, said taxpayers were spending £200m a year on social security for refugees seeking political asylum.

Only 4 per cent of these asylum-seekers are found to be genuine refugees," Mr Howard said. "They can appeal, but those whose appeals succeed are tiny in number. There's no reason they should be collecting benefits during the very long time — months or even years — it takes for their application to be reviewed."

Mr Masari has 10 days after the signing of the expulsion order in which to appeal.

Dominica doesn't give a banana about exile

PHIL DAVISON
Latin America Correspondent

Most folks on the little Caribbean island of Dominica couldn't care less about the possible arrival of the Saudi dissident Mohammed al-Masari. They are more concerned with next month's carnival, the highlight of their year, and a recent banana marketing deal they believe makes them more than just a "banana republic".

Some residents of the strongly Catholic island, however, fear that Mr Masari's presence could lead to a surge of Muslim fundamentalism and say the Prime Minister, Edison James, made a mistake by granting Mr Masari asylum.

Mr James categorically denied yesterday, for the second

straight day, that he had received a financial quid pro quo from Britain in return for accepting the dissident. Speaking to reporters in the capital, Roseau, however, he indicated that, as with almost every issue in Dominica, bananas were a factor. The fact that Britain is Dominica's main market for bananas was reason enough, in itself, for granting London's request to accept Mr Masari, he was quoted as saying.

"Most people here are not bothered about this man. It's not a subject that's being talked about on the street," said Rashid Osman, editor of the island's weekly newspaper, the *New Chronicle*. "Hardly anyone believes he'll end up coming here, anyway. Here, bananas are the big news. People are still

talking about the big banana deal."

Mr Osman was referring to a recent coup by Dominica and its fellow banana-exporting partners on the other Windward Islands. The islands, in a joint venture with Dublin-based Fyffes, bought over the marketing of their own bananas from the Geest company, which had shipped their crop for 40 years.

The deal, largely pushed by Mr James, was seen as a major breakthrough for the Windward Islands — Dominica, St Lucia, St Vincent and Grenada — by giving them total control for the first time over their key crop.

Mr Osman, a Guyanese brought up as a Muslim but now a Catholic, said some Dominicans, including the opposition

leader, Brian Alleyne, have expressed concern that Mr Masari could initiate a wave of Muslim fundamentalism on the 290-square-mile island, which lies between Martinique and Guadeloupe. He estimated there may be up to 100 Muslims, all blacks and relatively recent converts, reflecting a similar movement among blacks in the US and elsewhere.

The fact that there are few Muslims on the islands was one of the reasons cited by Mr Masari in London for describing Dominica as "inappropriate" for his exile. There is no mosque on the island. Muslims tend to congregate at a shop called the Muslim Store on the capital's Great George Street, run by a Dominican called Mohammed Abdullah Youssuf Ali.

Dame Eugenia Charles, the longtime prime minister succeeded by Mr James last year, said the figure of 100 Muslims was exaggerated and that she saw no danger of a surge of fundamentalism. "There are only about four of them on the island," she said. "They're not real Muslims. They wear white hats, call themselves Muslims and change their names, but they know less about Islam than I do."

Dame Eugenia reiterated that she and most Dominicans did not think Mr Masari would ever show up.

The *New Chronicle* yesterday carried only a short piece on Mr Masari in a corner of the front page, based on information from London and including no local reaction.

Killing of top Hamas bomber cheers Israel

PATRICK COCKBURN
Jerusalem

The most skilled Palestinian bomb-maker — "the Engineer", who planned a series of devastating suicide attacks against Israeli targets over the last two years — was killed yesterday in Beit Lahia refugee camp, according to the Islamic militant organisation Hamas, to which he belonged.

Yahya Ayyash was long hunted by Israeli agents as the father of the suicide bombing campaign that killed 70 Israelis and wounded another 250 in 1994-95. As the Koran was recited in mourning for his death over loudspeakers in mosques across Gaza, Hamas accused Israeli agents of assassinating him and promised to carry out revenge attacks.

Accounts of how Mr Ayyash died differed yesterday evening. News of his killing first came on Israeli radio, which reported that he had died in a bomb blast in the north of the Gaza strip, which is under the control of the Palestinian Authority. But journalists were unable to find the site of the explosion or discover any witnesses. A senior Palestinian security official was quoted by Israeli television last night as saying that Mr Ayyash was killed by a bomb inside his mobile phone.

Later reports said Mr Ayyash died in the Beit Lahia camp just to the north of Jabalia, and that he was shot dead with his wife. Local people were unable to identify the site of the shooting, although Hamas confirmed that he was dead. According to one source in Gaza, his body was removed by Mohammed Dahlan, a senior security official.

Israel was immediately jubilant about reports of Ayyash's death. Born in the village of Rafat just inside the western

boundary of the West Bank, he studied chemistry at Bir Zeit University, north of Jerusalem. Wanted by Israel since 1992, he had repeatedly eluded capture, but was reported recently to be living in Gaza. Yaakov Perry, the former head of the Shin Bet internal security agency, said yesterday: "I can say with satisfaction that the Engineer has ended his operations."

In October Fathi Shikaki, the leader of Islamic Jihad, the other Islamic militant organisation which carried out suicide bombings, was assassinated in Malta, almost certainly by Israeli agents. The death of Ayyash may turn out to be part of the same Israeli campaign to eliminate the leaders of the suicide attacks. Former Shin Bet officials were openly eager to claim a success yesterday in order to restore their reputation, which was badly damaged by their failure to prevent the murder of

Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli prime minister, on 4 November.

As Ayyash's death was announced on mosque loudspeakers in Beit Lahia, hundreds of Palestinians poured into the streets in panic as police cars and ambulances rushed to the scene. A speaker at one mosque said: "Hamas is saying that our hero, the hero of all the bombings, is a martyr."

Long before reports of the death of Ayyash, Hamas officials were divided about the gains to be made by continuing the bombing campaign. It faces severe repression by Israel and the security forces of Yasser Arafat, the chairman of the PLO, in Gaza and in the West Bank towns now under his control. Several thousand Hamas supporters are detained by Israel.

There have also been growing doubts among Palestinians about what the bombing campaign is meant to achieve.

Golan hopes rise as negotiators agree to meet again

CAROL GIACOMO
Reuters

Washington — Israeli and Syrian negotiators prepared to wrap up three days of US-mediated talks yesterday and agreed to meet again after next week's round of Middle-East shuttle diplomacy by Warren Christopher, the Secretary of State.

"I think there is an understanding that the talks should continue past Friday but not immediately... There is a general understanding that the talks should continue after the secretary's visit," an Israeli official said as the negotiators wound up discussions at the secluded Wye Plantation conference centre in Maryland.

Mr Christopher joined the discussions for a few hours on

Thursday and stayed for dinner, but his spokesman, Nicholas Burns, played down expectations of a breakthrough, saying no one thinks "peace is around the corner".

But yesterday, comments emerging from Israel continued to be upbeat, with Jerusalem hailing a new mood in negotiations with Damascus.

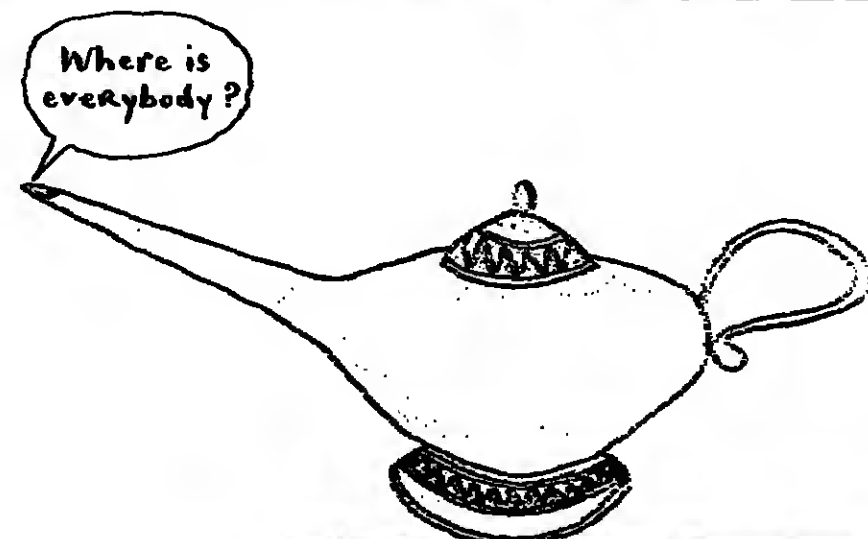
Yossi Beilin, a cabinet minister, told Israeli radio: "I would say that something very important has happened recently between Israel and Syria in that we have been able, after four years, to really talk for the first time."

"This discussion, because of its openness, could lead to peace."

Syria welcomed the participation of Mr Christopher, but urged him to press Israel to withdraw completely from the



Yahya Ayyash: Father of suicide bombing campaign



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Bowling out: Tomichi Murayama walks to the cabinet room at his official residence near Tokyo for his last meeting as prime minister before announcing his resignation

Dithering Japanese PM resigns

RICHARD LLOYD PARRY

The Japanese left's brief grip on power came to an end yesterday with the sudden resignation of the Prime Minister, Tomichi Murayama. His indecisiveness in the face of a series of disasters inspired record levels of apathy and disillusionment among voters.

Two-and-a-half years after the defeat of the Liberal Democratic Party in elections that promised a decisive change in Japanese politics, the new prime minister is almost certain to be Ryutaro Hashimoto, trade and industry minister and leader of the LDP.

The timing of Mr Murayama's announcement was unexpected, but his demise had long been predicted and few expected him to last as long as he

did. He came to power 18 months ago, in an unlikely coalition between his Social Democratic Party (SDP), and two of its ideological opponents – the LDP and the small splinter group Sakigake (New Harbinger).

After 38 years of unbroken majority rule, the LDP had lost its majority in 1993, but remained the biggest party. Mr Murayama's acceptance of the premiership was a transparent act of political opportunism that forced the humiliating renunciation of most of his party's socialist principles.

He presided over one of the most turbulent and troubled periods in post-war Japanese history, and a series of crises – including the Kobe earthquake, the gas attack on the Tokyo subway and the foundering Japanese economy – were met with indecision. Mr Murayama's one determined act – the passing of a resolution apologising for Japanese aggression on the 50th anniversary of the Second World War – was undermined by LDP members of his own coalition.

“I have decided to resign today,” a somewhat relieved-looking Mr Murayama, 71, told a televised news conference yesterday, admitting that he had “used up all my strength”.

“I thought it was time to renew the people in government and make a fresh start in the new year,” he said.

The announcement caused little more than superficial surprise, and the Tokyo Stock Exchange actually rose slightly on the news.

Mr Murayama's place will al-

most certainly be taken next week by Mr Hashimoto, whose assertive manner and confident nationalism have earned him a reputation as one of the most colourful and popular politicians in the country.

A dry, carefully groomed 58-year-old, with a fancied resemblance to Elvis Presley, Mr Hashimoto has been easily the strongest of the coalition leaders since his election to the LDP presidency in September. Last spring, he won huge domestic popularity for his combative refusal to yield to US demands to open up the Japanese automobile market.

His nationalism and assurance in international negotiations have given anxious pause to foreign diplomats – on VJ-Day, as Mr Murayama was trying to convince the world of his

country's contrition for wartime atrocities. Mr Hashimoto was one of nine cabinet ministers who defied their prime minister's orders by attending services at a nationalist shrine to war dead.

But many will welcome the elevation of the charismatic Mr Hashimoto, who has cultivated an image of himself as a decisive, straight-talking politician along Western lines, in contrast to the anonymous and diplomatically inept leaders represented by Mr Murayama.

How far he will be able to sustain this image is open to doubt. Since his election to the party presidency, he has adopted a much lower profile, and concentrated on cultivating more traditional members in his own party, who regard him as an arrogant upstart.

As well as securing their support, Mr Hashimoto must yield enough to the SDP to hold together the fragile alliance, at least until he can be confident of the LDP's chances at the polls.

The next general election will be the first to be held under a new system, incorporating proportional representation in an attempt to reduce political corruption, a cause of deep uncertainty and concern to Japanese politicians.

One explanation for Mr Murayama's relative longevity as leader was that nobody else in the government was prepared to take on the premiership.

As the eighth Japanese prime minister in seven years, Mr Hashimoto may discover that he has been handed a poison chalice.

Howard in fresh talks on hostages

TIM MCGIRK
New Delhi

Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, was briefed by his Indian counterpart yesterday on the plight of two Britons who, along with an American and a German, have been held captive for more than six months by Kashmiri rebels.

Mr Howard refused to reveal what S B Chavan had told him about New Delhi's efforts to free the two Britons, Keith Mangan, 33, an electrician from Tooting, and Paul Wells, 23, a Nottingham student, who were taken hostage while trekking in the Himalayas last summer. “You’ll understand that I can’t comment. The hostages’ lives are at stake,” he said.

When the westerners were first seized by Al-Faran rebels, the Home Secretary secretly sent several Scotland Yard anti-terrorist experts and hostage negotiators to India to help to secure their freedom. Indian authorities ruled out any military operation to rescue the hostages, arguing it might endanger the Westerners’ lives.

During his South Asia tour, Mr Howard said he would also raise the issue of the hostages during talks with Pakistani officials in Islamabad. Pakistan gives diplomatic and moral support to the armed insurgents, who have been leading a six-year Muslim uprising against Indian security forces in Kashmir. India claims that Pakistani intelligence is behind the Al-Faran band of kidnappers but Islamabad denies this.

The hostages, disguised in Kashmiri woolen ponchos and escorted by Al-Faran gunmen, were reportedly seen last on 23 December by villagers in the Himalayan foothills of southern Kashmir. The British High Commission in New Delhi was said to have sent Christmas gifts from the hostages’ relatives to Kashmir in the hope that sympathetic Muslims might pass them on to the captives.

It is not known whether the hostages received the presents, and any hope of an early negotiated release seems slim. India refuses to agree to the kidnappers’ main demand – that 15

Kashmir militants held in Indian jails be freed, in exchange for the hostages’ lives. Al-Faran broke off contact with Indian negotiators in November and, officially, no words have been exchanged since then.

Aside from the hostage crisis, Mr Howard took advantage of his Indian visit to push his tougher line on British immigration. He spent several hours with British consular officers in New Delhi, watching them sort through the thousands of hustling Indians demanding visas. “I’ve been shown evidence as to the extraordinary lengths to which people will go to gain entry to my country illegally,” he said. “They forge passports, visas, and make the most sophisticated attempts to deceive.”

Mr Howard contended that the Tory government’s new



Michael Howard: ‘Lives at stake’ if silence is broken

policy will help to weed out illegal immigrants trying to trick their way into Britain, but will not restrict genuine cases. “The same people who are entitled to come to Britain today will be allowed after the Bill goes into effect,” he said. Few foreigners who sought entry to Britain for political asylum were legitimate, he said.

Many Sikh militants have been given political asylum in Britain to escape alleged Indian government persecution in Punjab. Officials told Mr Howard that calm and stability had been restored in the region, but human rights monitors say Punjabi police continue to target dissidents.

Rifkind visit to sound out Hong Kong's mood

STEPHEN VINES
Hong Kong

Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, arrives in Hong Kong this evening with few illusions of securing any key agreements with China when he moves on to Peking later in the week.

Although Sino-British relations moved from cold to tepid following the October visit to London by China's foreign minister, Qian Qichen, both sides are cautious about how to proceed after a six-year period in which relations have been strained following the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre.

Mr Rifkind is “not going to Peking with expectations of great breakthroughs”, said a British official. “There’s no bag of sweets ready to be given out.”

The visit has been prefaced with a usual flurry of speculation about whether Britain is ready to sacrifice the colony's interests in favour of its longer-term relationship with China and whether this means a return to the old days of kowtow.

Equally predictably there has been a rash of reports about how China will insist that the Governor, Chris Patten, has no role to play in the ceremonies to mark the handover of power next year and there have been other stories about China's

demand that he be told to cease raising issues that the Chinese government does not wish to discuss, such as political reform and human rights.

One official involved in preparations for the talks dismissed all this as “low-level chit-chat”. However, there is little doubt that China's strategy is to isolate the Governor and seek a more cooperative response from the Foreign Office, which has traditionally been more sensitive to China's views.

In a new year message, Lu Ping, the most senior Chinese official handling Hong Kong affairs, said that Britain was showing a more co-operative attitude these days and expressed the hope “that this commitment [to co-operation] will not be restricted to words, but put into practice”.

This is China's coded language for telling Britain it wishes to hear no more talk about political reform in Hong Kong, nor does it want the colony's government to make plans without fully consulting Peking.

Officials in Hong Kong are stressing the significance of Mr Rifkind coming to the colony before going to Peking, “so he can get a first-hand impression of the mood of the community before going to China”, as one put it.

While in the colony, he will hold the first-ever public meeting with legislators, a move quickly dismissed by the outspoken legislator Emily Lau, who said this was little more than a gimmick to stimulate interest as “most members regard the British as irrelevant and that's why, in the past, in these closed meetings, hardly anybody turned up”.

In China, where Mr Rifkind will meet Mr Qian, and possibly the Prime Minister, Li Peng, he will want to continue discussions on the nature of the ceremonies for the handover of power on 1 July 1997. He will again try to get China to clarify its intentions on the right of abode and citizenship criteria for Hong Kong residents after 1997. The lack of clarity on these matters is undermining confidence in the colony and helping to provoke the high level of emigration.

Among a clutch of other issues high on the British agenda is the desire to seek China's agreement for the award of a contract to build the colony's ninth container-port terminal. China objects to the contract having been awarded to a consortium headed by the British controlled conglomerate Jardines, which it sees as being a political ally of Mr Patten.

Dictator's 'puppet' heads for poll defeat

PHIL DAVISON
Latin America Correspondent

Alvaro Arzu, a conservative 49-year-old travel agent and former mayor, is expected to be elected President of Guatemala in tomorrow's run-off ballot.

Opinion polls showed Mr Arzu, of the National Advancement Party (PAN), leading Alfonso Portillo of the Guatemalan Republican Front (FRG) by between 6 and 9 per cent. The winner will begin a five-year term when he takes the presidential oath from the incumbent President, Ramiro de Leon Carpio, on 14 January.

The victor's immediate priority will be to try to end a 30-year guerrilla war that has divided the population and led to widespread human rights abuses. He will also aim to halt a wave of kidnappings and a general sense of insecurity.

Mr Portillo, a 44-year-old economist and lawyer, is widely seen as a “front man” for his party's leader, General Efraim Rios Montt, the former military dictator notorious for his “scorched earth” policy against Indian villages he blamed for hiding left-wing guerrillas in the Eighties. He was barred from running himself.

Mr Arzu, twice mayor of Guatemala City, easily defeated Mr Portillo and 17 other candidates in the first round on 12 November but fell short of the 50 per cent needed to avoid a run-off. Mr Arzu scored 36 per cent to Mr Portillo's 22 per cent.

Mr Arzu was reckoned to have won a heated TV debate this week, in which each man assailed the other's character. Mr Arzu said Mr Portillo had killed someone while in exile in Mexico. Mr Portillo said he had done so in self-defence.

Perhaps because both candidates are conservative and there is little to choose between their policies, half of Guatemala's 3.7 million voters did not take part in the last poll. A higher turnout this time, with an estimated 15 per cent of voters still undecided yesterday, could give Mr Portillo the chance of an upset.

EU officials on fraud charges

SARAH HELM
Brussels

Two European Commission officials have been arrested by Belgian police, charged with misappropriating a tourism fund, it was announced yesterday.

The officials are accused of siphoning off hundreds of thousands of pounds of European Union money which should have been spent on tourism projects, and paying bribes to secure contracts to front companies proposing spurious tourism projects in several countries across Europe.

George Tzoanos, the Greek head of the Commission's tourism unit, is accused of turning the fraud along with Pascal Chaitillon, a French

colleague. Mr Tzoanos's wife was also arrested.

It is the first time police from an EU member state have arrested EU officials on fraud charges, and the controversy will again cast light on corruption within the European institutions. Public criticism of waste and fraud involving the EU budget erupted last year when its spending watchdog said that more than 4 per cent of the annual budget could not be properly accounted for.

Commission spokesmen insisted yesterday that the firm action taken over the alleged tourism fraud, and the organisation's full co-operation with the Belgian police, demonstrated that efforts were being made to stop the rot.

However, the tourism scandal dates back to 1990, and critics – particularly within the European Parliament – believe the Commission was slow to act.

Immunity from prosecution, granted to all EU officials, was only lifted last year in the case of the two men charged, when they were suspended. It is understood that Mr Tzoanos and Mr Chaitillon left Belgium once their immunity from prosecution was lifted last year and were arrested when they attempted to re-enter the country.

The charges relate to deals first set up in 1980 between the European Commission's tourism directorate and companies trying to secure tenders for projects associated with The European Year of Tourism.

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Kozyrev resignation: Communist success in parliamentary elections makes position of liberal Foreign Minister untenable

The West has lost a good friend in the Kremlin

Russian hardliners finally get their man

TONY BARBER
Europe Editor

Andrei Kozyrev's departure as Foreign Minister removes one of the leading pro-Western voices from the Russian government and, without provoking a radical change in Kremlin policies, may herald a subtle shift to a more assertive line.

In particular, the West may find that Russia takes a stronger stance on issues such as arms control treaties and NATO's proposed expansion into central and eastern Europe.

Under Russia's constitution, the President picks the Foreign Minister and holds primary responsibility for the direction of foreign policy. Major policy changes are therefore unlikely, since Mr Kozyrev's successor cannot stray too far from the wishes of President Boris Yeltsin.

However, some hardline ministers may try to exploit Mr Kozyrev's removal to press for a more robust anti-Western policy. Only last Thursday the Defence Minister, Pavel Grachev, warned the West that NATO's expansion might cause Russia to rethink its approach to short-range nuclear arms and to deploy a new range of weapons "consistent with new real threats". Mr Grachev has also said that Moscow may review its adherence to the Start-1 and Start-2 treaties on limiting intercontinental nuclear weapons.

One obvious candidate to succeed Mr Kozyrev is Vladimir Lukin, a former ambassador to Washington, chairman of parliament's foreign affairs committee and leader of the liberal Yabloko political movement.

Though no hardliner, Mr Lukin has often accused Mr Kozyrev of presiding over a decline in the international prestige of Russia, and if chosen he might present less of a



Looking West: Although Andrei Kozyrev's enthusiasm for 'friends' in Nato cooled in recent years, he still advocated a constructive partnership

pro-Western face to the world.

Others tipped to replace Mr Kozyrev include two career diplomats, Vitaly Churkin and Igor Ivanov, and Mr Yeltsin's chief foreign policy adviser, Dmitri Ryurikov. The first two men are closely identified with Mr Kozyrev's policies, but Mr Ryurikov is thought to have viewed Mr Kozyrev as too conciliatory to the West.

Communists and nationalists had long sought Mr Kozyrev's dismissal on the grounds that his policies were excessively pro-Western and not geared to the vigorous promotion of Russian interests. They complained that Mr Kozyrev was allowing NATO to set the pace of events in former Yugoslavia and that he was

doing too little to prevent the Atlantic alliance's expansion eastwards.

In fact, whereas Mr Kozyrev was an enthusiastic advocate of Russia's integration with the West in 1991 and 1992, he changed his tune somewhat in the next three years.

Aligning himself with a group of "pragmatic nationalists", he continued to develop a constructive partnership with the West but contended that Russia had its own distinctive traditions and interests and should drive a hard bargain when necessary.

Where he parted company from the Communist and nationalist opposition was in his refusal to accept that the West

was just as "threatening" to Moscow as it had been in Cold War times.

In a Russian television interview on 27 December, he condemned his critics for "a wish to go over in one way or another to the concept of an enemy, whether in respect of NATO or someone else in the West" and declared firmly that "NATO is not an enemy".

Like virtually all Russian politicians, Mr Kozyrev opposed NATO's plans to embrace countries that once belonged to the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact. However, he said he regarded these plans as "the mistake of a friend" rather than "a plot by an enemy".

Mr Kozyrev also denounced

his opponents for "a neo-imperialist policy under cover of various kinds of demagoguery towards the former Soviet republics".

Many Communists and nationalists have refused to acknowledge these republics, some of which have large ethnic Russian minorities, as fully independent states.

Mr Kozyrev is not the only relatively liberal minister to have resigned in the aftermath of the Communist victory in last month's elections.

Sergei Shakhrai, a deputy prime minister who was once one of Mr Yeltsin's most influential advisers on legal and nationality matters, left the government yesterday to take up a seat in parliament.

The Communist Party had long sought Mr Shakhrai's removal, arguing that he bore heavy responsibility for the Soviet Union's disintegration in 1991.

However, Mr Shakhrai had also gradually grown distant from Mr Yeltsin, a trend underlined when he broke away from the pro-Yeltsin government party last year and formed his own party to contest the December elections.

Taken together, the departures of Mr Kozyrev and Mr Shakhrai leave the government with a less reformist profile. The most important progressive politician still in the government is Anatoly Chubais, the minister in charge of economic reform.

HELEN WOMACK
Moscow

Andrei Kozyrev, Russia's Western-leaning Foreign Minister, resigned yesterday. His departure had been widely predicted since the Communists, who accused him of selling out Moscow's interests, won the parliamentary elections in December.

Interfax news agency quoted sources close to Mr Kozyrev as saying he had sent a letter of resignation to President Boris Yeltsin. The minister said in his letter that he had decided to represent the voters of Murmansk, who elected him to a seat in the State Duma in the recent parliamentary elections.

The presidential press service said Mr Yeltsin had issued a decree releasing Mr Kozyrev. No successor was immediately named.

Moscow hastened to assure the world it would maintain a steady foreign policy. "Western countries should not regard the resignation of Andrei Kozyrev from the post of Foreign Minister as any kind of threat or as an indication of change in Russia's foreign policy," said Mr Yeltsin's spokesman, Sergei Medvedev.

In the past, Russian cabinet ministers have lost their jobs only to be reinstated as part of the elaborate political game here. But this is most unlikely to happen in the case of Mr Kozyrev, who has been under pressure for months. Following the election, Mr Yeltsin must make some sacrifices in order to keep his reformist Prime Minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, and the key economic team around him.

Mr Kozyrev, relatively young at 44, had served Mr Yeltsin loyally since he became President in 1991. Pro-Western at heart, the Foreign Minister toughened his rhetoric to appease

Communists and nationalists who began gaining influence in 1993.

But this was insufficient for the hardliners who saw him, in practice, co-operating with the West over such issues as bringing peace to the former Yugoslavia.

Last autumn, Mr Yeltsin made clear he would not hesitate to use Mr Kozyrev as a scapegoat if his own political survival depended on it. On the eve of an important presidential visit to France and the United States, he publicly humiliated the Foreign Minister by saying his job was on the line, only to relieve him and take him on the trip at the last minute.

Mr Kozyrev saw the writing on the wall and stood in the parliamentary poll. Under the Russian political system, a deputy cannot also be a minister. Mr Kozyrev saw Mr Yeltsin a few days ago and evidently realised he had no hope of keeping his job at the Foreign Ministry.

Pressure from the hardliners clearly brought about Mr Kozyrev's downfall. But it is by no means certain Mr Yeltsin will choose a new foreign minister from the ranks of the Communists, now the biggest party in parliament, far less from the nationalists loyal to Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, who form the third largest group in the Duma. Mr Zhirinovskiy has put himself forward for the post, however.

The favourite for the job, Vladimir Lukin, comes from the liberal Yabloko grouping, whose support the government party, Our Home is Russia, is trying to win in order to keep the Communists and nationalists at bay.

Yesterday Mr Lukin, a former ambassador to the United States, welcomed Mr Kozyrev's resignation, saying it was a necessary development.

End of Cold War leaves UK as Europe's nuclear store

CHRISTOPHER BELLAMY
Defence Correspondent

Britain now has more nuclear weapons on its territory than any European state apart from Russia, following confirmation by Ukrainian officials yesterday that 90 per cent of the warheads on their soil had been returned to Russia, heir to the former Soviet Union.

But in spite of that, the number of nuclear weapons in Europe has reduced dramatically in the past decade and arms control experts yesterday hailed the return of the Ukrainian weapons to Russia as a great success.

Defence ministers from the United States, Russia and Ukraine watched yesterday as a nuclear missile silo was blown up at the military base of Pervomaisk, 180 miles south of Kiev, in a ceremony underlining the success of the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (Start), in spite of the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

The Ukrainian Defence Minister, Volery Shmarov, described the destruction of the underground silo - once home to six SS-19 Sileto intercontinental ballistic missiles, each able to carry six nuclear warheads for 7,000 miles - as an "important political event". The ceremony concluded a two-day visit to Ukraine by the US Defence

Secretary, William Perry, and the Russian Defence Minister, General Pavel Grachev. The presence of defence ministers from two superpowers was highly significant. General Grachev had blown up a US missile silo in October.

But the ceremony was delayed four hours after poor weather meant that the ministers' aircraft had to be diverted to an airfield farther from the missile site. The plane slid off the icy runway on landing, but no one was hurt.

Following the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1991, the spectre of several nuclear-armed states arose. The Lisbon protocol of 1992 committed the former Soviet republics where nuclear weapons were based - Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan - to returning them to Russia.

Ukraine, a country with about the same population as Britain, had 176 intercontinental ballistic missiles on its territory when the Soviet Union disintegrated. These could carry up to 1,200 warheads. Yesterday's announcement that 90 per cent of the warheads had been returned to Russia would leave Ukraine with about 120 - fewer than Britain or France.

All the 18 missiles in Belarus and 66 from Kazakhstan have been returned to Russia. Ukraine's 176 missiles were

the greatest worry, because Ukraine was believed to be the only country with the necessary expertise to maintain a working nuclear arsenal.

"It's a remarkable achievement," said Colonel Terry Taylor of the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies. "There was a great deal of tension when the Soviet Union broke up in 1991 - it's a great success story."

"Three states that could have been nuclear states are now non-nuclear states, and they have acceded to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty."

Britain and the US have provided financial and technical help to disarm the former Soviet republics, including the provision of specially designed rail cars and advice on nuclear weapons security.

Although the Soviet Strategic Rocket Forces - who were responsible for nuclear missiles - were among the most efficient branches of the Soviet military, they suffered, like the rest, when the Soviet Union broke up.

Furthermore, the Soviet Union had never planned to withdraw its missiles from Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan. The warheads have been withdrawn with help from the West, although the larger missiles are having to be destroyed *in situ*

because they are difficult to transport.

The MoD yesterday refused to confirm the exact number of warheads still held in Britain.

"We've always kept the number of warheads secret," said a department spokesman. The US and Russian nuclear stockpiles have been made public under the Start nuclear weapons treaty. Britain and France, which have not entered into any nuclear disarmament treaties, have kept their nuclear arsenals under wraps.

However, informed estimates put the number of British warheads - including those for the new Trident submarine-launched missiles, first deployed a year ago, and the Polaris missiles they are replacing, free-fall bombs and nuclear depth charges - at fewer than 300. Another 90 US nuclear warheads are believed to be on British soil, as against 1,500 a decade ago. That puts Britain just ahead of France and Ukraine.

The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) said yesterday France could have up to 500 nuclear warheads, although it probably has fewer. The US is also estimated to have 245 warheads left in Germany, 40 in Italy and 10 each in Belgium, the Netherlands and Greece. Ten years ago the figures were nearly 4,000 for Germany, 550 for Italy and 164 for Greece.

Papandreou drama darkens as Mimi falls ill with hepatitis B

ANDREW GUMBEL

The hospital melodrama surrounding Andreas Papandreou, Greece's ailing prime minister, took on a macabre new twist yesterday when his 40-year-old wife, Dimitra "Mimi" Liana, was found to be suffering from hepatitis B and ordered to leave the bedside she has faithfully attended for the past six weeks.

An official bulletin said that the prime minister's wife had been diagnosed at the initial stages of the disease and should recover within four to eight weeks. Ms Liana was moved

into a separate room on the first floor of the Onassis clinic in Athens, where her husband has been treated for lung and kidney failure since 20 November.

Ms Liana's incapacitation is likely only to intensify the battle to find a successor to Mr Papandreou, because she was one of the few key members of his retinue who refused to countenance his resignation, even though he is barely conscious and unlikely ever to return to public life.

Disidents inside Mr Papandreou's socialist party, Pasok, have demanded a replacement

by the end of this month at the latest, while the opposition New Democracy Party has tabled a censure motion in parliament in an effort to pull the country out of its political impasse.

Much speculation focused yesterday on the cause of Ms Liana's illness, a particularly virulent form of hepatitis, contracted, like HIV, from blood, sperm or other bodily fluids. The most common causes are sexual intercourse or sharing of needles for drug abuse.

Government sources suggested Ms Liana could have been infected by acupuncture or



Mimi: Her absence may ease the succession

a special cell rejuvenation treatment. But Greece's tabloid editors, who have published old photos of her in sexually compromising positions, are unlikely to waste much time.



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Mostar tense after second Croat attack on Muslims

A series of less serious incidents culminated in Thursday's



The shooting occurred hours after the Croatian President.

Richard Edgington, a captain in the WEU police, said his force was monitoring repairs on the

The WEU runs a force of 180 police in the town. But they have no powers of arrest and can only monitor trouble while they

Col Rayner said Nato troops believed they had not killed the gunman, who attacked the Italian sentry guarding a base in the Serb-held suburb of Vogosca, north of the city centre.

The most recent addition to the product line is 101F ("Main ingredients: ginseng, angelica, archangelica root, wolfberry fruit, salvia officinalis, etc")

What, I ventured, eyeing his bushy black hair, were the employment prospects for Dahao staff members who went bald? Of the Dahao factory's 1,200 workers, only two had gone bald, said Mr Xu. "One is a transporter. At first the factory tried to cure him, but could not afford to continue giving him the product. So this worker bought a wig. The second one, who tests raw materials, he also wears a wig now. Because in an ordinary Chinese home it is not possible to wash every day. And this kind of product has to be used after washing hair. It takes time and money."

Teresa Poole

and require a valid EU passport for these trips.

Republican about-face frees budget deadlock

DAVID USBORNE
New York

Hardline Republicans made a partial retreat in the epic Washington budget struggle yesterday, opening the way for government employees who have been shut out of their offices since mid-December to return to work immediately.

Congress was working feverishly last night to approve stop-gap legislation that would restore funding for about 760,000 federal workers who have either been working without pay or staying at home since 16 December, when the latest phase of the US budget crisis erupted.

The measure, which President Bill Clinton was expected to sign without delay, would only guarantee pay for three weeks, however, until 26 January, while negotiations continue between Congress and the White House on the fundamental issue of seeking ways to balance the federal budget within seven years.

Moreover, once back at their desks, many federal workers might find themselves with little to do, because the budgets for the operation of all but the most socially-sensitive federal programmes, such as meals-on-wheels, would remain blocked until a final agreement is worked out.

The about-face by Republicans in the House of Representatives reflects growing concern among their leaders, notably Speaker Newt Gingrich, that the American public is losing patience with the budget squabbling and with the fast-spreading consequences of the government shut-down, and that a majority of voters are blaming them, rather than the White House, for the mess.

Until Thursday, the House Republicans were adamant that they would resist restoring government operations while no final agreement on balancing the budget had been reached.

A first proposal by Mr Gingrich late on Thursday to pay federal workers at least until mid-March was rudely rejected by his own members at a fractious party meeting on Thursday night. He finally won support for the much shorter period, until 26 January, yesterday morning.

The squirming of the Republicans on Capitol Hill has brought cheer, by contrast, to the White House, which believes it is still winning the public-approval battle on the budget issue. Any suggestion that Mr Gingrich is losing control of his own rank-and-file only bolsters President Clinton's confidence.

But Mr Gingrich yesterday urged the President to take advantage of the temporary end of the crisis by coming forward with new proposals finally to ensure that America can achieve a zero deficit by 2002. "The challenge is now for Bill Clinton. The burden is now on his desk and his shoulders," he said.

Another round of negotiations on the balanced budget was due to start last night. There is still little to suggest, however, that the two sides will be able quickly to close the gap between their positions, leaving open the possibility that the government will be forced only to close down again on the 26th, which is three days after the President delivers this year's State of the Union address to Congress.

While Mr Clinton has pledged to co-operate in finding ways to balance the budget within the seven years sought by the Republicans, he remains unwilling to pledge the cuts that would almost certainly be necessary in such a politically sensitive programme as Medicaid and Medicare.

If, as was expected, the stop-gap legislation is approved, normality should begin returning to government operations from today, with, for instance, the reopening to the public of national parks, zoos and museums.



Battery power: The General Motors chairman, John Smith, presents the EV1, first mass-produced electric car for the American market. Photograph: Michael Caulfield/AP

Zero-emission electric car drives into smog of doubt

TIM CORNWELL
Los Angeles

Was the sexy little coupé that rolled silently into the spotlights at the Greater Los Angeles Auto Show really the salvation of the city of smog?

With a flourish, General Motors unveiled what it promised as the first mass-production electric car for the American market: a two-seater christened the EV1. It will go on sale at 25 dealerships in California and Arizona this autumn.

The whisper-quiet, zero-emission car has improved the odds that electric vehicles will finally make serious inroads in the US. GM executives called it the wave of the future, with the company's chairman, John Smith, describing it as a signal of "our commitment to technological leadership and our commitment to environmental stewardship".

But there was a certain note of scepticism yesterday, particularly among observers from the often conservative US car industry, who wondered who would buy the car. It is priced at more than \$30,000 (£20,000) and has a normal range of only 60 to 70 miles before requiring a three-hour charge.

California desperately needs electric cars, environmentalists say. The California Air Resources Board has adopted a clean air plan that counts on 70 per cent of all vehicles on the road being "zero-polluting" by 2010. But there remains the suspicion that the EV1 is little more than a fancy fig leaf offered in return for the board's recent decision to back off the first step of that plan - a demand that by 1998, 2 per cent of all cars offered for sale would be exhaust-free - a target car makers have insisted is impossible.

GM has spent an estimated \$350m (£230m) developing the EV1. The other Big Three car makers, Chrysler and Ford, have promised their own models by 1997. The company would not say how many cars it planned to put on the market, but analysts expect the figure to be only a few thousand.

The best-selling vehicle last year, a Ford pick-up truck, sold nearly 700,000. And the biggest story of the US car market recently has been the surge in sales of the gas-guzzling four-wheel-drive "sport-utility" vehicles.

The EV1 is powered by 26 lead-acid batteries with a maximum speed of about 80 miles an hour. Its maximum range of

90 miles drops dramatically in very cold weather to about 25 miles. Targeted as a second-car for shopping or commuting, its design is based on the Impact, a prototype GM first unveiled in 1990.

There are tax breaks on the car's purchase price, and air quality management officials are offering a \$3,000 rebate to the first 1,200 customers in Los Angeles. The local electricity company, Southern California Edison, promised an initial network of just 18 recharging stations at shops and train stations. Owners will need an expensive recharging unit and face the cost of replacing the batteries at \$25,000 to \$30,000.

None the less, insisted Ronnie Kun, a senior scientist with the Natural Resources Defence Council in Los Angeles. "It is great that finally after years and years of delay GM has finally made a firm commitment with a firm date".

"It is a very, very sleek and impressive product," he added. "In Los Angeles, the average commute to work is something like 12 miles each way. With an electric car, you don't use any juice when you idle. There are plenty of people who would buy this car."

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Lincoln Kirstein

Kirstein, left, with George Balanchine: Kirstein was the moving force behind the New York City Ballet.

Photograph: New York City Ballet

tival Theatre Academy at Stratford, Connecticut.

During the Second World War, Kirstein saw US Army duty in England, France and Germany. In May 1945, along with Captain Robert K. Posey, he discovered and supervised the recovery of the huge collection of art looted by Nazis and found in Siegenburg Salt Mine at Alt Aussee. He was decorated by the government of the Netherlands for his service.

Kirstein involved himself in the civil rights marches in Alabama in 1965. He was also a firm supporter of Arthur H. Mitchell's Dance Theatre of Harlem from its earliest stages.

Among the many awards Kirstein received were the Capezio Award for lifetime contributions to dance, in 1953; the Benjamin Franklin Gookin Medal of Britain's Royal Society of Arts, in 1981; and the US Medal of Freedom in 1984.

Marilyn Hunt

Lincoln Kirstein, dance writer and director; born Rochester, New York 4 May 1907; died New York 5 January 1996.



Harper Gow: cold storage

Barry E. Sealey
Leonard Maxwell Harper Gow, businessman; born 13 June 1918; MBE 1944; chairman, Christian Salvosens 1964-81, vice-chairman 1981-87; chairman, Scottish Widows' Fund and Life Assurance Society 1972-75; chairman, Radio Forth 1977-87; Kt 1985; chairman DFM Holdings 1985-89; married 1944 Lillian Kjaer (two sons, one daughter); died 11 January 1996.



Harper Gow: cold storage

In 1990, he went to Canada to meet with supporters of his cause, but, after an immigration hearing, he was forced to leave the country. Rudolph claimed that he was unaware of any executions or mistreatment of workers at Nordhausen, and that he tried to obtain extractions for the workers and improve their conditions. This version was rejected by Jewish investigators, who declared his involvement in a mass hanging of slave workers which took place outside his office.

To the end, Rudolph angrily denounced what he saw as the exploitation and rejection he suffered from the US government. "They only wanted me for what I could do," he said, "and when it was finished they did not care what happened to me."

Peter Bond

Arthur Rudolph, rocket scientist: born 9 November 1906; married (one daughter); died Hamburg 1 January 1996.

cent children slaughtered by the fear of King Herod, the motherhood of Mary, the mother of God. Every moment of their lives calls for meditation: "And Mark kept all these sayings, pondering them in his heart" (Luke ii, 19).

Finally, to the feast of Epiphany, today. Over the centuries, this ancient festival has attracted to itself many moments from the life of Christ. It recalls his baptism, when the obedient servant was revealed as the beloved Son of God. It recounts the visit of the Magi, when the Jewish child-king was first acknowledged by the gentiles. It commemorates the infant-king at Cana, when Jesus rescued the festivities by turning water into wine. And, again, the Christ is the manifestation of Jesus as the Son of God: this was the first sign of his transforming power, and a symbol too of his gloriously gratuitous generosity of God.

Each episode is a lens that refracts a single ray from the light of the incarnation. We cannot gaze directly at the mystery. We can absorb it only partially, gradually. We need the Christmas season; we need the multiplicity of its images. For only with their help

To glimpse it, but not to grasp it. To see it, but not to seize it. Rather to allow it to allow Him, to seize us. For if Christmas has become primarily to us, then it will pall as soon as we weary of punch and mince-pies. But what if it really is Christ? Mass, God's own feast, "a million times told lovelier, more dangerous," and then exhausted in its meaning? If so, then Christmas is truly still present, God in his limitless glory still dwelling among us. Happy Christmas, Happy Epiphany, and a Happy New Year.

Christmas

Children slaughtered by the fear of God; of the motherhood of Mary, of God. Every moment of the Gospels for meditation: "And Mary these sayings, pondering them in (Luke ii,19).

to the feast of Epiphany, today, centuries, this ancient festival has itself many moments from the

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The Independent
Weekend

From Cézanne at the Tate to Pulp's UK tour, the essential guide to the new season

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INSIDE STORIES

It is curious that after such a long and varied career the role that catapulted Simon Callow to world-wide fame was that of Gareth, the genial, overweight homosexual in *Four Weddings and a Funeral*. 'Nothing could please me more,' he says. 'I knew that man completely'

I assume everyone kisses ladies' hands or cuddles little lap dogs. I can't help it. I think Vienna, I think architecture and music; whipped cream; Nazis. I think Vienna, I think decadence, irony, waltzes and schnitzel and Freud; and Orson Welles on the big wheel in the Prater

I've never been all that impressed by mink. I had six great aunts and every one of them had a mink. They weren't call girls, they hadn't married into money, they weren't the daughters of a marquess, they were none of them on the stage. Six aunts. Six minks...

Although I may never love another house as much – the perfect, rambling, tall and many-roomed Victorian family home – our neighbour (let me call her Alice) drove us away in the end. She was spiteful, cunning, obsessional, opportunistic and devious

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2
picture story



BACK TO WORK

Story by Dominic Cavendish. Pictures by Russell Sach and Mike Sharp

7 am, 2 January, 1996: cars are streaming down Lode Lane and into the Solihull Range Rover plant. They accelerate brutally past the company Christmas tree and disappear into the car-park. After 11 days of shut-down, the fuel-injected inrush might be mistakenly put down to New Year zeal, but a forlorn-looking driver offers the more prosaic explanation: "They call this a car factory, but unless you get here first thing you haven't a hope in hell of finding a space for your car."

A huddle of 30 early birds has formed in front of the security hut waiting to start their first day back at work. The surliness of the security guard ("If you are going to smoke, then throw your cigarette butts on the lawn over there. Do not put them out here") is not enough to wipe the smile off Mark from Birmingham's face: he spent the last day of the holiday needlessly worrying that his car wouldn't start ("You have to put a blanket on the bonnet on the night, that's the trick").

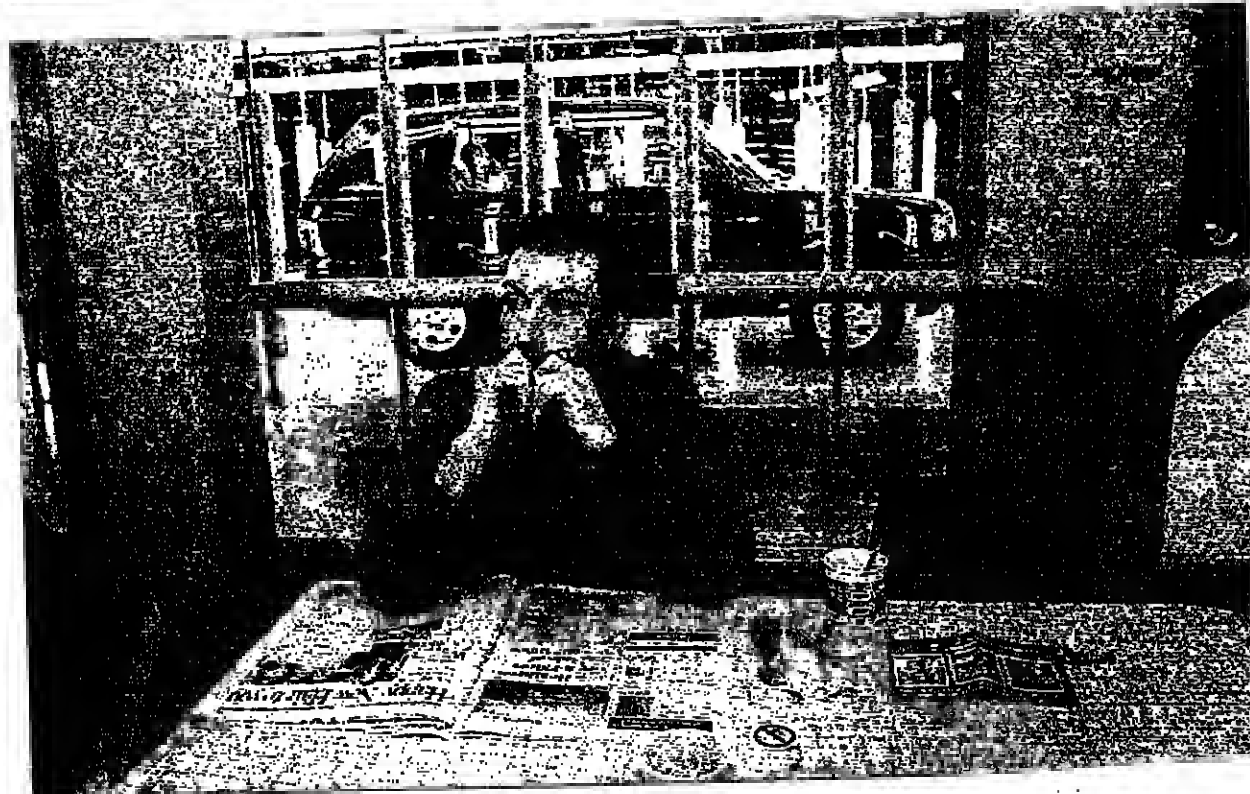
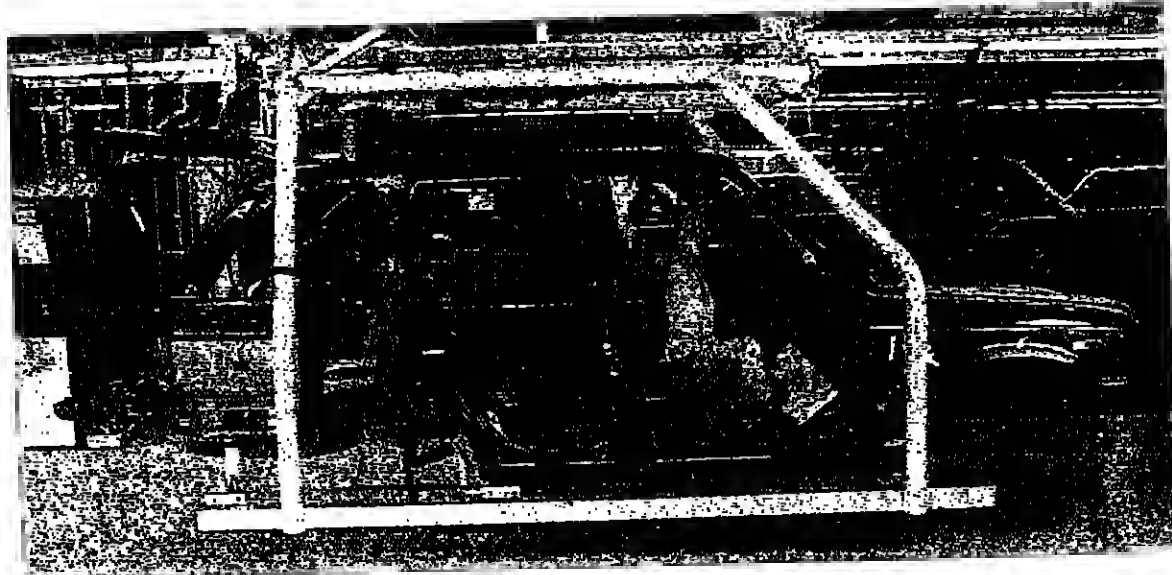
Inside North Works, the small groups that comprise the eight production "cells" are being given a Christmas debrief by their team-leaders. "You ask them what they've been up to," says Kevin. "It's close-knit, quite cliquy - we all went for a breakfast booze-up before Christmas. You soon find out whether there have been any problems. Today, there are two off with bereavements and one more had to rush off when they got in. It's always bad at this time, what with the cold weather." He is encouraged by the low rate of absenteeism. "It's not a case of wanting to go to work, more a case of not wanting to go to work."

There is, none the less, an unmistakable oh-hell-it's-

Monday feeling about this Tuesday morning as the new Range Rovers solemnly inch round the shop floor on a travelator to a quiet hum, grommets as far as the eye can see. "Everyone's a bit wrecked - the first day back is really depressing," says Mark in "Pre-Body", clutching a bundle of electrical wiring like mordant fairy lights. Further along the line, there are pockets of cheer. Joyce is relieved to be only cooking for five again after spending each mealtime during the holidays with her 30 in-laws. Joanne has resolved to spend less on her four kids next Christmas ("£2,000 this time - it's a lot isn't it?"). But Clare - who's putting labels inside the cars - is furious. "I watched the telly on New Year's Eve, and I couldn't believe it - when they got to 12 o'clock they went to Aberdeen. They always show Millennium Square in Birmingham. I thought, 'What is going on?' If you wanted to spend New Year's Eve in Scotland, you'd go there, wouldn't you?"

In the canteen at 10am, there is much contemplative munching of sandwiches. "I saw two people wearing Range Rover jackets in town over Christmas," says Angela, cuppa in hand. "That's sad - very sad." Darroo mutters as he eyes the paper.

The fog of despondency only begins to lift during the 30-minute lunch break. In the main canteen, John from design is discussing the P100 Bosch sander he was given by his wife. "Did you see the Alan Partridge show on TV?" his mate Nick asks. "The number of times they plugged Rover - someone here must have paid them a lot to do that. One thing you can say," he says, picking with resignation at a half-eaten piece of cod, "the food doesn't get any better after Christmas."



EDITED BY DAVID BENEDICT

THIS WEEKEND WHY NOT...

READ Discounted Best-sellers



This is the first ever January in which bookshops can, courtesy of the now-defunct Net Book Agreement, take part in the winter sales. Expect to find amazing discounts on former best-selling novels (*The Moor's Last Sigh* by Salman Rushdie, above, was knocked down to £4.99 in Eason's of Galway last week, should you be heading that way) and how-to non-fiction that missed the present-buying season, although it is optimistic folly to think you'll find Della Smith's *Winter Collection* going at half price. And if you've a fiver left over on your book token, invest it in *It...* (*Questions for the Game of Life*), a maddeningly simple but rather clever sequence of 500 nasty questions to ask yourself, including, "If you had to have one platonic friend witness your next sexual act, who would you ask?" Just the thing to wake up Twelfth Night cocktail parties.

GO TO The National Film Theatre



Seeing stars? You could be. As Frank Loesser wrote, Baby, it's cold outside, so tomorrow why not hurry on down to the NFT for its Fred Zinnemann day. This guy cast some pretty gorgeous people who strutted their stuff to considerable effect throughout his long movie career. In 1950 he directed Marion Brando's first movie, *The Men*, and regardless of gender or persuasion you have to admit the man was pretty good-looking back then. Similarly Grace Kelly who, er, graces *High Noon*, not to mention the extraordinary Gary Cooper. Then there's the entire cast of *From Here to Eternity* (above), including Deborah Kerr and Robert Mitchum who lie on the beach and get to deliver the immortal lines: She: "Well, on the other hand, I've got a bathing suit under my dress." He: "Me too."

All films at the NFT, Sunday (0171-928 3232)

BUY Embroidered Dog-collars



Green Farm Trading has come up with what it tells us is "the most exciting thing to happen to dogs for a long, long time". Mistakenly, I thought that was *Video Dog*, the objet trouvé I espied on a less than reputable market stall this Christmas, which promised all the fun of a four-legged friend with none of the fuss. Just insert the video and sit back... No. This is the real McCoy. Away with lost dog discs, now all 101 of your Dalmatians or your sole Airedale can proudly display his/her name on a personalised dog-collar plus your telephone number for emergencies. The hard-wearing washable collars come in five different colours embroidered in a choice of seven shades with a free lead attached. Remember, animals can accessorise, too.

From £22.50. For full details, ring Green Farm Trading (01473 737877)

EAT At Heathcote's Brasserie



Where there's muck, there's brasseries, as our food editor Emily Green remarked when naming Heathcote's her restaurant of the year. Smug Londoners will be shocked to discover that this remarkable restaurant is in Preston. Whether you're after a yellow pea soup faced with truffle oil ("fantastic"), lamb and rosemary hot-pot ("fantastic") or a gooey chocolate tart, served with a splooge of even gooier and more chocolately sauce ("great"), Lancashire lad Paul Heathcote's place is for you. Downstairs there is a bar where one can drink and/or eat light food, notably seafood, while upstairs is more of a restaurant operation. The wine list, though short, is a pleasure, a noun that describes the entire experience.

Heathcote's Brasserie, 23 Winkley Square, Preston (01772 252732). Downstairs meals £10-£15, brasserie £25.

TRY The Alexander Technique



One minute Jane Fonda was exhorting us to feel the bum, then Rosemary Conley came up with the Hip and Thigh Diet. For those who regard exercise as something for which you need a sick note, food and fitness fanaticism continues to be the nightmare of the Nineties. None the less, there is a thoroughly sensible way to relieve the ever-accumulating aches and strains of modern living. The Alexander technique is about learning how to recognise unnecessary tension and to curb harmful habits without torturing yourself. It concentrates on posture and balance, using hands-on treatment to help coax you into carrying out simple, everyday movements that encourage us to be aware of how we use our bodies.

A five-week course begins today at the Armoury Fitness Centre, 25 Pond Street, London NW5 (0171-483 4830) £39.

Handwritten text in a box: "150 من الـ 100"

A wonderful indulgence

Simon Callow was an unlikely overnight success: for 20 years he's been doing very nicely, thank you, as an actor and, mark you, as a writer, translator and director. The only significant omission from his impressive CV is 'champion of the gay movement'. By Angela Lambert. Photograph by Herbie Knott

Marcel Carné's classic film *Les Enfants du Paradis* was shot in 1944 at the height of the Nazi occupation of France. It starred the legendary Arletty and Jean-Louis Barrault as the romantic lovers, and Pierres Brasseur and Renoir as his rivals. Many people still think it the greatest French film ever made. Its devotees have seen it so many times that they know its script and its cutting rhythms by heart.

Now, Simon Callow is bringing it to the stage at the Barbican in his own translation of Jacques Prévert's original screenplay, using a cast of largely unknown young actors. It is, he says, an exhilarating and terrifying enterprise, but, if it succeeds, it may be the best thing to happen to the Royal Shakespeare Company since *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*.

"It was something that sprang straight out of my unconscious. Adrian Noble asked me if I'd like to direct something for the RSC, and I came up with a list of 27 possibles. At the end I said, 'I'd love to see *Les Enfants du Paradis* on stage,' and that's the one he chose."

"Prévert wrote a sublime screenplay. The film has a brilliant plot and is a marvellous exploration of romantic love, and actors should be allowed to have another chance at it. I have taken care not to see the film again but went straight to the original screenplay. I've been almost slavishly faithful. I tried to preserve the syntax," he squeezes his hands together and draws in his breath as if demonstrating a tight corset, "the constrictions of the French language, because it creates a different kind of thought. My primary purpose has been to release on to the stage a kind of acting that hasn't been seen in England for many years. I want to find the breadth and generosity and fullness and richness in the text that makes these people live."

Callow acts and directs plays, operas and films, as well as working for television. He also writes books — his latest is a biography of Orson Welles, following an earlier life of Charles Laughton — and does translations. How on earth does he manage to keep so many projects going at once? "I suppose energy is my greatest asset in life. Being a compulsive individual, once I get going nothing will stop me." That and, I suggest, self-discipline? The last time we met he was still a smoker. "Sixty a day. But I stopped," he snaps his fingers, "just like that! I have a great gift for giving things up."

He has also lost a good deal of weight since appearing as the lovable but distinctly chubby homosexual in *Four Weddings and a Funeral*. "Pizza, pasta, pesto, puddings — I cut them all right out. Lost three stone, and kept it off. No trouble. It's called the Eating Out diet." Is there, then, an austere side to him as well as the overflowing energy and exuberance? He strokes my cat, who is purring so ecstatically that she sheds ginger fur all over his black T-shirt and trousers. "There's an odd ruthlessness, which is the threat in my temperament."

Callow's ancestry is complicated. He had a fierce German grandmother to whom he attributes the ruthlessness. "She believed she had Hapsburg blood in her veins. She had paintings of her ancestors looking very elegant on the walls and used to drink a toast to them every night." His mother's father was Danish, possibly descended from an aristocratic French family, the Guises.

Not that he gives a damn, Callow says he deplores the British preoccupation with class, but acknowledges that it is a tremendously useful acting tool. "English actors can 'do' class to within a decimal point, largely by accent. Actors themselves are classless. Because the theatre is a kingdom of its own with its own rules, actors gain great confidence in their relationships with each other and carry this over into the outside world. It makes them fearless, knowing they can pass easily among all kinds of people."

Callow has been acting for 20 years. His first recorded credit dates

from 1975, when he appeared in a play called *Passing By* with Gay Sweatshop. Unlike other high-profile actors for whom "outing" is a major career decision, Callow has never made any secret of his homosexuality. "What I can't bear is deception and concealment. From the moment I started to be interviewed, people would ask about my private life. I always told them the truth, knowing it wasn't news unless it was an exposé. Secrets are what the press thrives on. For some years there was a conspiracy by journalists and PRs to keep the truth about homosexual actors from getting into the press. I remember the press officer at the National Theatre saying in 1979: 'I cannot allow you to destroy your career by being open about your homosexuality.'"

"It wasn't until I wrote my own first book [*Being an Actor*, published in 1985] that I was able to state it quite unequivocally. I suppose I was one of the first established actors to say voluntarily, 'I am gay.' People like Ian McKellen and Antony Sher came much later. Ian is by nature a leader and a spokesman, and I'm not either of those things. Although I've lent my name and support to organisations like the Terrence Higgins Trust, I'm not militant. I haven't led or even joined marches. I don't like it, and I won't do it for anyone."

"But I will write an article or make a speech stating the normality of homosexuality, which puts me at loggerheads with people who maintain that homosexuality is inherently separate. I absolutely deny that. Always at the back of my mind is post-war Nazi Germany, and the position of the Jews. Homosexuality is somewhat but not entirely comparable. Bettelheim is clear that the fate of the Jews was compounded by their desire to put their heads down and not get noticed. I was prepared to lose my career as an actor and never work again rather than deny or conceal my sexuality."

"Public opinion is changing on this, although politicians — with the exception of Chris Smith — aren't yet ready to risk their careers on it. Let's find out whether the time has come. When Michael Barrymore came out, the public resoundingly voted for him even though they knew he was gay, which somewhat overturned the conventional wisdom. There's still no big Hollywood star who'll openly admit to being gay. Somebody ought to test it, though there will certainly be horrible casualties."

Is he in favour of exposing covert homosexuals?

"I take the Stonewall line against outing. It's totally unfair to confront something that the other party may be unable to confront in themselves, and for some families it is the greatest catastrophe on earth to have a son who's homosexual. In spite of that, more and more gay people whose lives have been led in complete secrecy from their families end up admitting it. For about 30 per cent it leads to terrible pain."

It is curious that after such a long and varied career as an actor, with parts that included Mozart in *Amadeus*, Molina in *Kiss of the Spider Woman* and Burgess in *Single Spies*, the role that catapulted Callow to world-wide fame was that of Gareth, the genial overweight homosexual in *Four Weddings and a Funeral*. Callow smiles wryly.

"People stop me in the street in Tahiti, Barcelona and tiny towns in the mid-West to say they loved that, which is amazing. I'm delighted. Nothing could please me more. It's a part I absolutely wanted to play. I knew that man completely and could have played him in any situation. The general quality of screenplays is abominable. They're palpable drivel, but that one was delightful, refreshing, real. It took a tremendous risk by having Gareth die. Unlike the reckless and meaningless profusion of most movie deaths, this one was rather solemn and meaningful — but I liked the fact that he was a gay man who died, not of AIDS, but because he ate and drank too much."

The film also brought WH Auden to a mass audience, via the haunting love poem read by a grieving partner

at Gareth's funeral service. Callow observes, "It was one of those very positive things that occasionally happen: thousands, perhaps millions of people who wouldn't have believed they could enjoy 20th-century poetry capitulated to this one. The background of that poem is interesting. The first part comes from *The Dog Beneath the Skin* and was a lament for the death of a Fascist dictator. Then Auden slapped on the final verse and turned it in to a love poem."

Callow's recent role in *Jefferson in Paris* as the 18th-century miniaturist and fashionable painter Richard Cosway will probably increase attendance at the Cosway exhibition at London's National Portrait Gallery. "Cosway is an absolutely extraordinary, deeply, complicatedly interesting man!" Callow enthuses. "He was a very clever, very noisy, rather simian character who pulled weird faces that alarmed people; a virtuoso, a collector, a pioneer interior decorator who created parties that were events, complete with stage sets, in which he dressed his wife as the centrepiece. She was 20 years younger than he and their relationship is fascinating and curiously modern: an 'open' marriage."

"His art is exceptional, as anybody who goes to the exhibition will see. The microcosmic skill of creating a full portrait in a space two inches deep. It's a mad skill; a skill of genius. There was an irony in the fact that I was giving a cameo performance as a cameo painter, or miniaturist."

What, I ask Callow, does he regard as his own particular skill? "I seem to have a gift, a propensity for playing real-life characters — Handel, Mozart, Verlaine, Rousseau — and I'm drawn to them all, partly because they're egregious, bold and fascinating. The result is a wonderful indulgence. The imaginative task of taking a character from the page and trying to give them the same degree of life on screen or stage; it's an act of spontaneous imaginative contact, like being a virtual-reality machine."

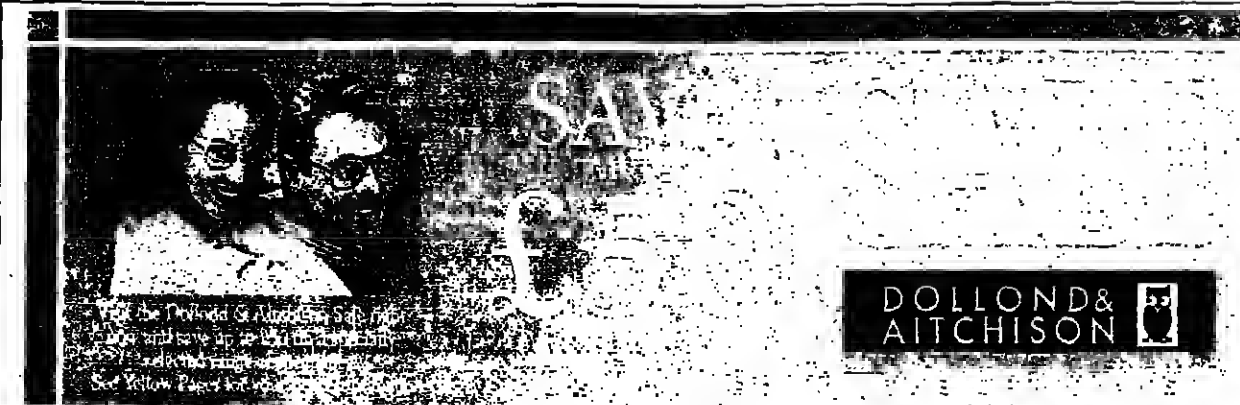
His latest real-life role was playing Charles II in *England My England*, John Osborne's last screenplay. "It was Channel 4's major investment for the Purcell Tercentenary and they put it out on Christmas Day."

"John's done an extraordinary script, seizing on the idea that Purcell was the supreme expression in music of the spirit of the Restoration. It was his view that the reign of Charles II was the pinnacle of English life: under a monarch of generosity, wit and imagination, fully aware of the sensuous pleasures and the need for balance and tolerance, English life reached its zenith."

John was able to end his life on a huge up-beat of celebration. He chose, daringly, to counterpoint his portrayal of Charles II with an account of a dramatist in the 1960s, which enabled him to unleash volley after volley of denunciation of modern England and what's happened to it. This dramatist is called Charles, and he's played by the same actor — me — as Charles II. I tried to play the dramatist Charles more like John himself than Jimmy Porter. It became very poignant doing it, knowing that the man himself had just died."

Back, finally, to his present obsession: *Les Enfants du Paradis*. It is not the first time he has adapted a film for the theatre — he did that very successfully with *Carmen Jones* at the Old Vic — but this is a more complex work. "It's frightening for me, the idea of filling the stage with so much life, with a language of acting that is not spoken nowadays: big, generous acting that takes the romantic experience head-on. It's massive. It's the biggest thing I've ever done."

Simon Callow's production of *Les Enfants du Paradis* for the RSC is at the Barbican Theatre, London EC2 (0171-638 8891); previews 22 to 30 Jan, then 8 Feb to 2 March. 'Richard and Maria Cosway: Regency Artists of Taste and Fashion' at the National Portrait Gallery, London WC2 (0171-306 0055) to 18 Feb



shopping

A life in the shift of...

David Rogers, 58, butcher, Masham, North Yorkshire.

Established by his father, William Stanley, in 1921, David joined W S Rogers and Son when he was 16 and inherited the business when his father died 20 years ago. His wife, June, does the accounts, and his son, Anthony, will take over when David retires. The family also owns an abattoir.

I get up at 7am. After a light breakfast - I love a fry-up, but only at weekends, I'll drive to the abattoir, load up the van with a couple of sides of pig, beef or whatever we need, and drive four miles to the shop in Masham. The shop opens at 8am and by the time I get there, the lads have got their blue and white aprons and smocks on. Keith and Kevin have worked for me for 20 years. Keith looks after the front shop where we sell the meat, our new range of home-made pies and sausage rolls - Anthony is moving us into pies - packets of Pate stuffing and ready-made Yorkshire pudding. Kevin is second in command. The three lads who work in the back shop bone meat for freezer orders and catering orders, make pies and sausages and organise private killings for local farmers. Two of them spend half of the week in the slaughterhouse. In the back, they listen to Radio 1, which I don't appreciate. There's no music in the front, but there are posters - pictures of different cuts of lamb, pork and beef published by the Meat and Livestock Commission. You'd be amazed at how many young people don't know what a piece of topside looks like.

It gets busy by 9am. The mince, chops, stewing steak and select cuts for the window display have to be chopped and prepared - folks today like the top cuts and trimmed meat. In my father's day, people bought meat on the bone and cheap cuts. No one's interested in neck of lamb now, or rabbit, tripe, or faggots, and all meat has to be boned. It's a much more specialised job. We sell ox tongue, but hearts, cheeks and livers are diced up for dog meat. We don't sell veal - it's too expensive.

Keith organises the window display and we always have a special offer. Mince and stew tend to sell at the beginning of the week, chicken in the middle and steaks and joints of beef at the weekend. The locals are traditional meat-and-two-veg people and most still have a Sunday roast, although some will go for a drive or to a pub for lunch. People's habits are changing. There are vegetarians in Masham, but just who they are, I don't know.

It's not easy being a butcher today. My father didn't have supermarkets or vegetarians, or television programmes on turkey farms or BSE, come to that. Beef sales dipped on the first two Saturdays in December after the last BSE scare and much of my job is reassuring customers. We handed out leaflets on BSE and I even wrote a letter to the *Darlington and Stockton Times*. Butchers like ours are getting thin on the ground, but we're fortunate to be where we are - out on a bit of a limb. People rely on us.

Lunch starts at 12.30pm. We don't shut the shop. The breaks are staggered. I have a pie and work through mine. The lads can buy pies and sausage rolls at cost price, but they tend to go out. Business is slack after lunch, but picks up when the mothers collect their children from school. We close at 5pm, and the meat is put away at around 4.30pm. All the lads muck in to swirl down the floors, axes and knives with boiling water. I get home at around 5.30pm and make a few phone calls, organising slaughtering for next week. I have supper at about 6.30pm. If it's Monday, we'll have the Sunday joint cold. Tuesday is lamb chops, pork on Wednesday, chicken portions on Thursday and Friday, steak on Saturday, and on Sunday, my favourite - roast beef. I'm looking forward to passing the business on to my son in a few years. I don't have a grandson yet, only a granddaughter. I've never thought about her taking it on. I am a Yorkshireman, after all.

The man from Liberty, he say Yes!

They choose what we get to choose. But do they always get it right? Charlotte Packer meets the big-store buyers

Nick Springett is the man responsible for all that you covet in Liberty's lighting, accessories, contemporary furniture, textiles, handicraft and oriental departments. His route to buying was a matter of chance.

"I started as a sales assistant in 1987 as a fill-in job," he explains. Within 10 months he was manager of the British Craft section. Now he presides over six departments from his tiny attic-office, just off the lighting department. "Liberty is a bit of a queer fish in terms of the buyer's role," he confesses. While most other companies have a central office with a collection of buyers dedicated to sourcing and selecting merchandise, Liberty's buyers work alone within their specific departments. They head the teams of sales assistants on the shop floor and are as closely involved in the actual running of the store as they are with what will appear on the shelves from one day to the next. Nick believes this contact with the staff is essential. "It's all very well to go off to India and return with some wonderful product, but you can't just plonk it in front of the sales staff and expect them to get on with selling it. They need to know where it came from, and so on, so that they really know what they're selling." Likewise he is keen to get regular feedback from the customers.

Nick makes two major trips a year, visiting trade fairs and suppliers. "Wherever I am, I keep an image of the shop in my mind's eye, and whatever I buy, the colours and the quantity, are all related to that. There are lots of things that will work here because of the space. We think the Moroccan look will be strong this year, and if we decide to do it, we'll be able to create a feeling of opulence better than many other stores can manage."

Roughly 70 per cent of his stock is off the shelf, the rest is developed in tandem with designers. "I might see people making a totally different product, but know that they could produce what I want, that their style would work. One designer came in with candlesticks, now he's producing door knobs, fireside sets and this year there will be furniture."

An inveterate shopper, Nick is always aware of what the competition are up to - a trip to the post office will probably involve popping into every shop he passes on the way. The same curiosity holds when he is abroad. "There is a store in New York called ABC and they developed this amazing look, so I went over to check it out. I thought it would be great for Liberty. I told them I was thinking of doing something similar, and they said, 'Oh, but we copied the look from you.'"

So what does Nick think it takes to dedicate your life to buying? "The main criterion is a flair for choosing product. You've either got that or you haven't. Obviously there's business sense, but that can be learnt by anyone. My boss said she could give me 30 products and I'd be able to go 'no, yes, yes, no, yes' while the buyer with only the business head would spend all day agonising over just one of them."

In a bright open-plan office at Butler's Wharf in London's Docklands, Alex Willcock, a buying director for the Conran Shop, has a rather different approach to stocking shelves with enticing merchandise. "We have a fairly tight team of people. There are five of us in the UK responsible for about 12,000 products, and we deal with 1,100 different suppliers." As well as three trips to India each year, the various members of the team visit trade fairs and degree shows.

The shows are particularly important as the Conran Shop buyers are keen to support young designers. Alex and his colleagues all have design backgrounds. After training as a furniture designer, he spent some years working in interior design and moved to his current post at the Conran Shop after a stint in Australia.

The buyers develop new ranges as well as sourcing products. "We come up with ideas, this may mean a very basic sketch which we'll hand to someone or we may issue a full design brief," says Alex. And they get an enormous amount of design offers sent through the post. "Not actual products," Alex hastens to add, "but people send projects and photographs. Some great things have come through the post, but more often it's simply that these spark an idea."

Terence Conran has a say in everything. "He's a fantastic sounding board, and his input is really a seal of approval on what we're doing." Regular merchandising meetings are a crucial part of the process. "We get everyone together for what tends to be a very lively discussion. It's a healthy process for the buying team and the shop team to go through. If someone believes passionately in a product, then the majority of times we'll go with it - take a risk."

Last year's runaway hit, a pair of connoisseur pyjamas, started out as just such a gamble: "They were pink and orange and really strong and we looked at them and thought, 'Hmmm', but in the end we went with them and they were a huge success. I'm sure if you went to another company you might find them saying orange pyjamas, who's going to buy them?"

This is where Alex suspects other buying teams fall down. "I think they over-analyse their customers. It gets to a stage where there's no life and excitement to the product. Buyers need an eye for something new and a sense of humour. They need to see the fun side of a product." Next comes an understanding of the manufacturing process. "It's taken for granted that you're going to have an appreciation of colour and design, but if you don't have an understanding of how something is made..."

Fashion is another pitfall. "It can get faddy," says Alex, "you can make a store look wonderful with a theme, Morocco say, but what if you don't happen to dig Moroccan colours? Not everyone wants their home looking like a Kasbah."



Main picture: Nick Springett, buyer for Liberty. "Liberty is a bit of a queer fish in terms of the buyer's role... the number one criterion is a flair for choosing a product. You've either got it or you haven't." Left: Karen Miller, home furnishings co-ordinator for M&S. "We pick up on the big messages and then do them the M&S way" (Photo: Good Housekeeping). Right: Alex Willcock, buying director for the Conran Shop. "Buyers need an eye for something new and a sense of humour... you can make a store look wonderful with a theme - Morocco, say - but not everyone wants their home to look like a Kasbah."



The creative buying role at Marks & Spencer is held by the design co-ordinators who act as guides and style interpreters for the buyers proper. Karen Miller, home furnishings co-ordinator, describes their role as "feeding them with information about what shapes and colours they should be looking for." Travel is essential, and the buying team visits international trade fairs to keep tabs on what is happening around the world. "We pick up on the big messages and then do them the M&S way."

Karen trained as a furniture and product designer and worked for the Conran group and Habitat before joining the M&S homewares team three years ago. Although at M&S the buying is on a far larger scale, she says the difference between the processes are not so great. "Although we sell volume, there still has to be an agreement between commercial considerations and design direction. Our customers want things that are aesthetically pleasing, well made and good value."

Curiously, Marks & Spencer doesn't do any market research - with some 14 million people walking into their stores each week, virtually everyone in the United Kingdom is a potential customer. "They might buy food, fashion or homewares, or all three, so we offer as wide a choice as possible." For Karen the scale of the business is one of the bonuses. "When you see certain products, and you know how many people have bought them, it's fantastically exciting."

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AUCTIONS

In August, Bonhams began sending its cheapest furniture to its Honiton saleroom in Devon, reckoning that European shippers with their hard-to-park containers would feel more at home down there

If buyers seem to be fighting more feebly for furniture in the high street this sale season, it could be because the auction houses are luring them away. New year sales apart, January has always been a brisk month for furniture sales: Christmas spent in confinement with that wine-stained sofa or wobbly dining table seems to that.

This week there are four down-market furniture sales. To savour the saleroom versus high street battle for buyers, try this innocent experiment. Telephone one of the London auctioneers' furniture salerooms and ask how much the dining suite you bought new only last year at John Lewis or Harrods might fetch. The estimate you get could be as low as 10 per cent of the original cost.

The auctioneers reckon that in the past three years their sales of "brown" furniture (Edwardian and earlier carpenter-made stuff) in the £100-£5,000 range have made a hole in the high street market for new furniture (production-line composite and veneer). Three years ago, Phillips seldom had more than 15 per cent private buyers at their down-market furniture sales, the rest being dealers. Now the proportion of private buyers is at least 40 per cent. The auctioneer's target is couples who want a dozen wine glasses, a dinner service, and a dining table and chairs for under £1,000.

Latest in the battle for buyers is Bonhams' "swift sales". The first, selling furniture, paintings, glass, silver and ceramics, is on

Monday 15 January at 1pm - clashing with Phillips' furniture sale (however, these are fortnightly sales, compared with Phillips' weeklies). Catalogues will be rudimentary and devoid of photographs, with lots consigned as late as midday on the Thursday before the sale. Buyers will be given four weeks to pay.

Every other week - soon to alternate with "swift" sales - Bonhams holds a downmarket but respectable sale of "good" furniture, with plenty of estimates in the low hundreds. To lure more bidders, sale times have been swapped: they are now on Wednesdays at 1pm, instead of Tuesdays, in the hope that both private buyers and dealers will make a day of it by attending Christie's South Kensington furniture sale in the morning and Bonhams's in the afternoon.

It remains to be seen whether Bonhams' "good" London furniture sales will become a hunting ground for private buyers. In August, Bonhams began sending its cheapest furniture to its Honiton saleroom in Devon, reckoning that European shippers with their hard-to-park containers would feel more at home down there. The Honiton saleroom is now bulging with old furniture, some of which will overflow into the London "swift" sales.

Some old favourites have disappeared from the salerooms, particularly upholstered second-hand sofas made after 1950. They do not conform to new furniture fire safety regulations that came

into effect in March 1993. Strongest antique furniture sellers: pillar dining tables, the young couples' passport into polite society, still being knocked down to between £800 and £1,500.

Best investment: sturdy Edwardian bedroom furniture, particularly wardrobes, inlaid with urns, swags and ribbons: £2,000 might not be too much to pay for a big one in good condition. These are among the last carpenter-made products we are likely to see.

Ebonised black furniture is out of vogue and cheap. An ebonised card table of the 1860s to 1870s aesthetic period might be knocked down to £150, compared with double that three years ago. Georgian toilet mirrors in mahogany are also cheap (£70-£150). And for those who are really broke, pretentious and eccentric, why not make up a set of dining chairs from odd ones? Single Georgian dining chairs can be had for £60-£100.

Down-market London sales of antique furniture: Monday, Phillips Bayswater (12 noon), Lots Road Galleries (6pm); Wednesday, Christie's South Kensington (10.30am), Bonhams Chelsea (1pm). Auction listings are on p26. The winner of the Evelyn Waugh bookplate competition will be announced next week.

John Windsor



Caroline Donald learns to paint
Photo: Jane Baker

Stipple, by all means, but be subtle

At a Jocasta Innes paint course, Caroline Donald learns to strip away the excesses of the Eighties

Jocasta Innes is a generous soul; something of a Saint Delia of the decorating world. She has produced an astonishing amount of paints, advice and equipment to demystify her craft and help the amateur at least attempt the effects displayed in her books that would cost hundreds of pounds should Jocasta, or one of her staff at Paint Magic, apply them for you. As well as supplying the materials, she runs one-day workshops to show lesser beings how to use them. In the week before Christmas I rolled up to the basic paint techniques class with notebook and apron in hand.

Flu had struck, reducing the class size to three, plus a trainee instructor. I must confess I was the least artistic of the three: Vicky designs textiles and wall-paper, and wanted to add some new techniques to her repertoire, and Alicia had just bought a house that she wanted to decorate herself. The best I could offer in the way of artistic credentials was a rather over-enthusiastic Paint Magic colour-washing of my dining room walls: the resultant smudgy brown swirls were closer to a dirty protest, according to the less polite of my dinner guests, than a paint effect.

The very words "paint effect" are inclined to strike fear or loathing into the hearts of anyone who has dared to break the monotony of plain matt walls, and the proselytising Jocasta must take her fair share of the blame

for every failed experiment. Remember the Eighties? Sponged and rag-rolled walls, busy as a Friday night Glasgow pavement, and stencilled honey-suckle running rampant above dressers so distressed as to need their own helpline – it was step-by-step books such as those published by Jocasta that made it look so easy.

Down in the basement of the Richmond branch of Paint Magic I was expecting to be instilled with the mantra "Thou shalt stipple every surface in sight" but had not reckoned on the bouncy good sense of our instructress, Clodagh Miskelly, who showed us how, in true Nineties style, less could be so much more. We were to learn the paint techniques so beloved of the Eighties, but to apply them as details rather than to every available surface.

First, a slide show charting the move towards simplicity and the bleached "Scandinavian" look that is currently popular, with a few homages to the painty one thrown in: Jocasta's limewashed desk where she writes all her books; Jocasta's frescoed kitchen, decorated by friends after a jolly dinner party; and Jocasta's Tuscan farmhouse-effect drawing room. I blasphemously longed for a stray slide of Jocasta's B&Q magnolia downstairs loo.

Then it was on to the paints themselves. Oddly, the EC seems to be making life easier for those of its citizens who feel the urge to wield a paintbrush.

Strict disposal regulations are forcing manufacturers away from traditional oil-based paints and into developing durable water-based products that are much easier to use. There is even an acrylic converter that will cover surfaces such as gloss or formica to make them accept water-based paints. So, farewell then, paint-stripper and blowtorch. Alicia, owner of a multitude of glossy skirting boards, looked delighted at this.

And so to colour-washing, described in the student programme as "the fresco effect for modern times". Why, then, had my dining room turned out so unappealing? Clodagh said I'd made the common mistake of using a matt paint as an undercoat instead of a non-porous surface such as vinyl film, or Paint Magic's own colour-wash base (fancy that), so the glue had sunk into the paint in great patches, rather than sliding gracefully over the base coat.

Easier said than done: but to remove any doubt we were presented with pre-painted boards on which to practise sponging and brushing on to the colour-wash – and it worked.

So, straight on to distressing a picture frame. The raw pine had already been primed, all we were required to do was to apply a base coat, let it dry, and rub wax into the bits that we wanted to show through the top coat. Then, after the top coat had dried, we took wire wool to the corners and

along the grain where the paint would naturally rub away with time. *Voilà*, instant ageing. It looked so good I started marking down pieces of furniture at home that I could age and pass off as heirlooms.

Why one should want to make a perfectly attractive terracotta pot look as if it was a weathered iron or copper one was slightly beyond me. You paint the pot black and then build up the rust colours with a nearly dry stencil brush before applying small amounts of gilt paint to the areas most likely to be worn by the elements.

We then learnt all the dreaded scumble glaze techniques of the past few years, practising in a particularly lurid shade of pink paint, perhaps as a warning. The effect depends on the materials used. We tried cotton rags, black bin liners, natural sponge, a long horsehair brush (for an effect called flogging) and a strange instrument called a "rubber rocker" which produced beautiful woodgraining when used with confidence. Otherwise it produced a sludgy skidmark effect more akin to someone walking up the walls to welly boots.

The last assignment was stencilling. With Clodagh advising us to start always in the centre of the wall to keep the lines straight. Silence descended as we created our masterpieces of colour and shade. Even my careless splooges turned out pretty when the stencil transfer was removed.

Despite the fact that she had a shop full of Paint Magic products upstairs to plug, some of Clodagh's recommended ingredients and methods sounded more like a Sainsbury's shopping list than one of artistic decorating tools: vinegar, sugar, washing-up liquid and flat beer for graining; hair conditioner for keeping the brushes soft; brown boot polish for ageing and a hairdryer for drying paint. In this down-to-earth context, spending an afternoon painting a flower pot suddenly seemed an eminently sensible way to pass the time.

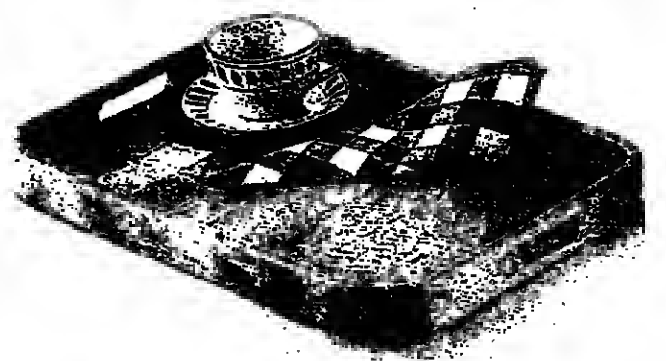
One-day paint courses

The Paint Magic Studio runs courses in paint effects from five different centres, three of which are in London. Courses include Basic Paint Effects, All About Mosaic and Scandinavian Paint Effects. For general course details ring 0171-354 9696 or fax on 0171-226 7760. One-day courses start at £69.

The London School of Decorative Paintwork is based at 2 Fulham Park Studios, Fulham Park Road, London SW6 4LW. For details ring 0171-371 5968 or fax on 0171-731 2334. A one-day standard course is £95.

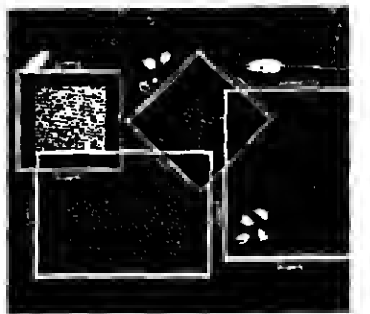
Revivals is based in Queensbury, near Halifax, West Yorkshire. One-day courses start at £70. For further details ring Brian Carr on 01422-246069.

six of the best tea trays

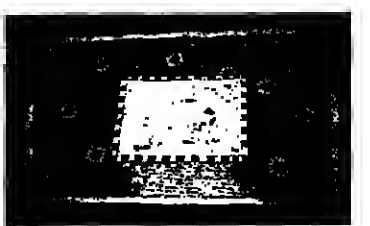


1 Divertimenti tray, £33.95 Handsome solid-wood tea tray that would suit both cottage and design-conscious homes. From the Divertimenti (Mail Order Ltd), Freeport (G12881), London SW6 6YX, or call 0171-386 991

2 Touch Design trays, from £65 Minimalist glass trays featuring a sand-blasted glass base and edged to maple. They look delicate but are quite sturdy: the glass is specially toughened and will carry most items. From Touch Design, PO Box 60, Andover, Hants, SP11 6SS (01264 738060)



3 Occasional Arts, from £22 Colourful, honey trays painted with fruit, flowers, animals, stars. They will also paint any animal to order on to a tray. They're made from MDF and are heat and stain resistant. From Occasional Art, 176 Ffordd-y-Parc, Lichard, Bridgend, Mid Glamorgan, CF31 1RA (01656-669662)



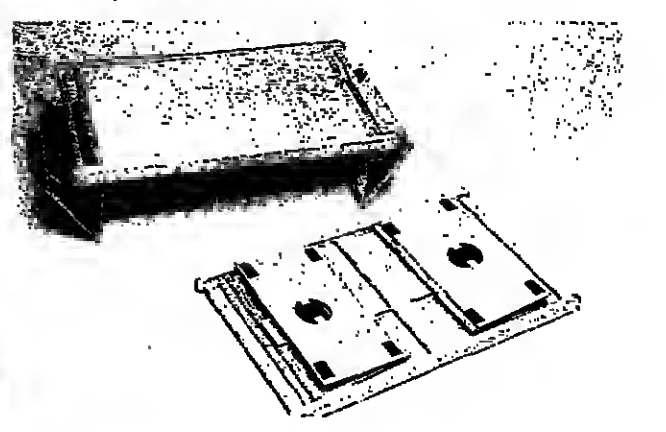
4 Maggie Philo, découpage tray, £65 This is almost too beautiful to spill milk on, even though it's carefully varnished so that it won't actually get spoilt. Buy it as an heirloom, or just to prop up on the shelf. Maggie Philo runs courses on découpage in London and Brighton. Maggie Philo, 18 Walpole Road, Brighton, BN2 2EA (01273 696405)



5 Past Times, £29.50 Those cherubs again. Still, they are rather sweet, and the wooden tray, "hand-gilded in Florence" comes at a reasonable price. You'll be pleased to know that they also come with a "wipe clean" surface. From Past Times (0800 106666)



6 Amanda Harman, £120 Ingenious tray for breakfast-in-bed. It folds completely flat but, when opened, its canvas side-pockets expand to hold magazines, newspapers and pens with which to do the crossword. Available with natural canvas pockets, or red and green as in the picture. From Amanda Harman, 46 Epirus Road, London SW6 7UH (0171-381 2282)



bazaar

Bestsellers

Top 10 items sold at Lillywhites

Ping Single Golf Balls	£2.50
Wilson Sting Hammer Tennis Racket	£99.99
SportRider Fitness Machines from HealthRider	£199.99
Mitre Ultima Premier League Football	£12.99
Wilson 1200 set of Irons (steel)	£275.99
Berghaus Activity Fleece	£74.99
Football replica jerseys	£36.99
Bauer FX3 skates	£79.99
Nike Field Trainers	£24.99
Columbia Longs Peak Men's and Ladies' Jackets	£179.99

Good thing

Supreme Stainless Bird Feeder, £24.95

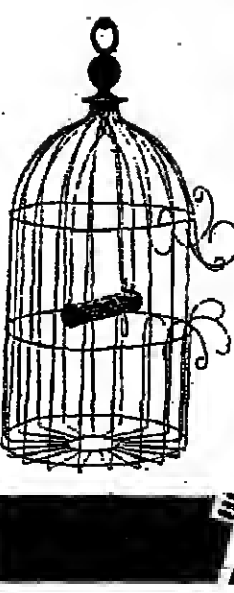
Peanut feeders come in many shapes and sizes and we are told that the apparent simplicity of their wire mesh designs is the result of much research and effort. The challenge, it seems, is to ensure that the feeders are squirrel proof. Not only is this little number given a three-star Squirrel Defence Rating (SDR) by CJ Wildbird Foods Ltd, it's also one of the few feeders which can withstand the beak of the Ring-necked Parakeet. CJ Wildbird Foods Ltd, The Ree, Upton Magna, Shrewsbury SY4 4UB (01743 709545 for a catalogue)



Mad thing

Bronze and Stainless steel Bird Feeder, £250

This fabulous flight of fancy is every twitcher's dream, guaranteed to lure the birds into your garden, once they've got used to it, that is. Designer, Stephen Einhorn said it took a few days for the birds to brave the feeder's exotic curly perches but pretty soon they were flocking to eat from the nut-filled bar which hangs in the centre. Stephen Einhorn Ltd, 210 Upper Street, London N1 1RL (0171 359 4977)



Checkout

Out of this World Clifton Down Shopping Centre, Whiteladies Road, Bristol BS8 2NN (0117 973 2518)

What is it? A new concept in retailing. A sign on the door reads: "Out of this World is a consumer co-op and this is your shop owned by you the customers."

What this means: You can only shop here if you become a member (£5 for life). They are currently offering a free, three-month trial membership.

Appearance: Bright and airy mini-market with a social conscience and a global theme. There is a Japanese section, an area devoted to South American and African crafts and so on. Placards with information about the environment cover the walls in an attempt to prove that shopping can be a learning experience, not just a leisure activity.

What can I buy? Food, gifts, make-up, clothes and books, but the choice is limited – there is only one range of clothing, and it only comes in one colour. The stock is chosen because it conforms to one of five categories: healthy eat-

ing, community development, fair trade, animal welfare and environmental sustainability. Consequently the shelves are stacked with plenty of things you would be hard pushed to find anywhere else – Manymoos washable menstrual pads, for example. A weekly shop here would be tricky and expensive. Organic avocados are £1.29 each, grapefruit 95p, Savoy cabbage 90p, washed carrots 69p per pound and muddy carrots 63p per pound. There are Linda McCartney's sausages in abundance as well as a wide range of vegan products including Rice Dream non-dairy beverage at £1.79 a litre.

Who shops here? A mixed crowd: sightseers and the member shoppers. People from every age group and cultural background imaginable. But are they committed enough to animal welfare, fair trade and environmental issues to shop here regularly enough for the venture to work?

Unexpected pleasures: The white-board in the corner on which customers write their suggestions. Current concerns: "Organic eggs?", "Broccoli please & no music!", which provoked someone else to reply, "There was some Michael Nyman playing while I was here which I liked!"

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shopping

Lady, it's cold outside

It's a wonder, given the virulence of the animal rights campaign, that anyone dares sport a fur. But look around you and you'll notice that women still wear mink. Or, at least, bits of mink. By Louise Levene

Fur is back. No it isn't. But every year at about this time there appears to be a revival in fur wearing. The anti-fur lobby attribute this seasonal phenomenon to a lavish and unscrupulous campaign on the part of the fur lobby (the fur lobby has always denied doing any such thing). The more likely explanation is that in our annual trip to Bond Street for the winter sales we find ourselves unaccountably rubbing shoulders with a lot of rich people and suddenly spot that we are the only shoppers not sporting a mink.

I've never been all that impressed by mink. I had six great-aunts and every one of them had a mink. They weren't call-girls, they hadn't married into money, they weren't the daughters of a marquis, they were none of them on the stage. They were fur machinists and had each decided at some point that they too should own a coat pieced together from those sad little rodents. Six aunts. Six minks.

Not only was the mink coat itself a status symbol in the Fifties and Sixties, so was its cut. Last year's model could be as bad as no mink at all. Rather as lesser women would alter the hemline of a dress, these doughty machinists could set to work turning last season's shawl-collar-double-cuff into a racy bracelet-length-half-belt-at-the-back. They wore them at every opportunity with hideous hats and a heavy dose of Je Reviens. Too mean to pamper their minks with the summer cold storage they required, their coats gave off an overpowering stench of mothballs. From a distance, family funerals were pure Hollywood – six lipstick-stained matrons in mink. Move in for a close-up and you'd be gassed by naphthalene.

Harrods, which bottled out of selling fur in 1990, continued to offer cold storage for furs for several years but the falling demand put an end to this anomalous service. At £50 a go it would probably work out cheaper to buy the coat its own fridge. No London department stores sell fur coats any more thanks to relentless campaigning by animal rights groups. The now-defunct Lynx started it with posters pointing out that it took 40 dumb animals to make a fur coat "but only one to wear it". Campaigners would stand outside Harrods harracking anyone in sight. It was a licence to shout abuse at rich women and the campaigners seized the opportunity with enthusiasm. The Eighties, which gave Porsche, Mont Blanc and Armani a licence to print money did no favours for what had for so long been the ultimate luxury item. The mink coat was on the run.

Many celebrities embraced the cause. Doris Day, Brigitte Bardot, numerous designers and more supermodels than

you could shake a stick at announced that they had given up. Many celebrities took no notice at all. Sophia Loren trousered a cheque for £2.25m from an Italian fur company in search of a figurehead. Other famous people still furred up are such trendsetters as the Queen, the Queen Mother (whose favourite pelts are apparently called Mary and Betty), Shirley Bassey and Barbara Cartland. The Queen took an old favourite out of mothballs for her trip to Russia in 1994 and rattled the cages of the animal rights activists.

There is a school of thought that believes that very old fur coats are all right; that the Queen's wedding present had been a long time dead and that no purpose would be served by giving it a decent burial.

PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) disagrees. PETA has a worldwide membership of around half a million. Most of them are women over 35 although the age range stretches from a precociously aware six year old to vegans in their nineties. PETA's claim to fame was made up of posters featuring various supermodels in the raw, proclaiming "I'd rather go naked than wear fur". Even an old coat is, as the spokesperson put it "a coat of death perpetuating the image that fur is glamorous". So what is a girl to do with her moth-eaten stranded mink? "It should be used for anti fur demonstrations. If you must wear it, it should be painted with an image of the death of the animal that produced it". Karl Lagerfeld take note.

PETA has tended to concentrate its energy on this small (albeit very visible) group of animal abusers. Wouldn't its campaign have had a greater impact on ordinary people if Christy Turlington had announced that she'd rather go naked than wear a leather jacket? That way men could share some of the guilt so liberally showered on women. Isn't there a danger that the struggle will be hijacked by a bunch of class war misogynists who get an excuse to threaten rich women? "Financially rich but morally and emotionally bankrupt" points out PETA, neatly. The organisation is determined to focus on this rather soft target because it sees a chance to drive home its advantage. "Fur is an issue we are definitely winning. The fundamental difference between leather and fur is that it is a by-product of the meat industry." They also claim that fewer lives are lost: "You can make three coats out of one cow [well you can if you don't want sleeves] whereas it takes 80 chinchilla." Basically, much as they deplore the consumption of animals, the idea of scalping a living creature and then throwing away the insides away fills the PETA people with a special horror. Much of

Europe, though, has yet to be convinced: Eastern Europe goes for the log value but Southern Europe is still in the fur business for the glamour. PETA may claim that the animal rights lobby is on the march in Italy but the streets of Rome still look like a tarts convention. Seven-and-a-half million signoras own a fur coat (but then this is a nation that shoots thrushes for amusement).

Meanwhile, whatever anyone may say about fur being "back", the British fur industry is in a slow but terminal decline. There were an estimated 500 retail furriers in Britain in 1980; by 1992 there were only 57. The Fur Education Council did its best. There was a "Wear Your Fur Coat Day" in 1993 but they were fighting a losing battle. Besides which, the average British woman, whatever her ideological position, is reluctant to spend six grand on a coat she's too frightened to wear, even supposing she had that kind of money.

"In the past it was a status symbol provided by men" claims a spokeswoman for the fur education council. "Today women buy their own furs." Or bits of them anyway. Rather than face the grief that goes with wearing full-length racoon in the streets, they opt instead for little bits of fluff which the passing animal activist may fail to spot. Even the saintly department stores that abandoned full-length chinchilla are now stocking the odd rabbit-collared coat. This speakeasy practice has been a shot in the arm for the fur trade whose other nice little earner has been the camouflaging of old skins. Mink-lined raincoats are a huge sideline. Your mother's old three-quarter length black glama can go undercover for around £700 (including mac).

My great aunts were never reduced to this hole-in-the-corner business. Their own minks got the occasional airing as one by one they wore them to each other's funerals. By the time my mother needed a fur machinist to turn her own hard-earned mink inside out, they were either dead or past it. Turfed out of the spat at outside Harrods, tired of paying for the mink's annual summer vacation, my mother shoved the dratted thing into a cupboard. It's a pretty coat, lovingly crafted from the dead bodies of 40 little minks. Instead of warming and adorning the body of a woman who wouldn't buy a fur coat now but did buy one once, they just hang mouldering in a wardrobe just like thousands of others. Long dead as animals, they are now defunct even as garments. Ban the fur trade tomorrow by all means but what possible purpose is served by all those little mammals walled up in their mahogany graves? They should be worn – if only at funerals.



Photograph: Edward Webb

THE WORD ON THE STREET: WOMEN WHO WEAR FURS

Belgian tourist, (unwilling to give her name) in a wolf fur

I would not buy an artificial coat as it's not good for nature. Of course, it doesn't hurt animals, but producing synthetic materials causes more damage to the environment than producing natural furs. Many people are against fur because they've been indoctrinated that it's bad for the animals. They don't realise that these creatures are specially bred, like cows for steak.

Helena Crosby, graduate student, in a real fox fur

I bought this with some money I was left a couple of years ago. It's second-hand, and I'd like to say that makes it all right. But I do sometimes have spasms of guilt, and even feeling like Julie Christie in *Doctor Zhivago* can't completely get rid of them. If I bought a new coat, I think I'd definitely go fake.

Anne Sklar, American tourist, wearing mink

This is one of two genuine furs I bought in Virginia. Sure, I've bought fakes in the past and I'd consider it again, but you can't deny that real furs are both prettier and warmer. I hope you're not going to pour paint over me. Are you?

Miranda Husband, legal secretary, in a fake fur

The only animal rights I'm violating are teddy bear rights, which is how it should be. Even if you don't believe killing animals is cruel, there's got to be something obscene about spending several thousand pounds on one item of clothing.

June Knott, an English ex-pat visiting from New York, in a fake fur

I got this half an hour ago in a sale because I liked the look of it, but at home I do have a real one. Last year in New York, they seemed very anti-fur. This year, though, the fur boom seems to be back. There does seem to be a different attitude to fur over there. They're not as paranoid about wearing the genuine article. A lot of people buy it. They have to. It's bloody freezing.

the thing about...

The rolled-over Lottery

Buy 13,983,816 tickets for tonight's £34m rollover draw and you are guaranteed to win the jackpot. Nearly 14 million one-pound stakes allows you to cover every possible outcome from 1-2-3-4-5-6 to 44-45-46-47-48-49. The winning combination is guaranteed to be one of these sequences – or something in between. Around one hundred million attempts will be made to win the £35m jackpot tonight, so seven joint winners can be expected. Investing 14 million quid to get just five million back is foolish, making the organisers' attempts to foil bids that cover all the bases all the more baffling.

Anytime backing all the horses in a betting shop this afternoon will get at least one prediction right:

lottery players are mug punters. Back every horse in the King George VI Chase at Sandown Park this afternoon, and you will get back most of your stake; but on the lottery, less than half your "investment" is returned as prize money. So the National Lottery fails in the first principle of gambling: you should lose money, but slowly. After a triumphant debut in Ladbrokes on the eve of the first 1974 election, with a florin on Labour (3-1 outsiders), I have been on a cheerful downward spiral. A bet buys entertainment, and as such can be excellent value.

Las Vegas exists not because of an American addiction to cash, but because it is a great place to spin out \$100 with a hundred spins of

the slots or the roulette wheel. A well-run casino is more than a place to lose or win money – it is a magnificent piece of theatre. By comparison, tonight's National Lottery Live is unlikely to be great television. It will, for the 14th month, provide massive prime-time publicity for a private company, and restate the principle that mug gambling is good for you.

Bah – New Year humbug, you could repose. What about the good causes, starting with your local newspaper? He or she stands to make £700,000 from your £14m flutter, exacerbating the differences between the haves and have-nots: a National Lottery terminal in your shop is a licence to print money. As well as today's commis-

sion windfall, retailers enjoy a constant cashflow from insidious instincts. "Get addicted to gambling in an Instant!" should be the text of the scratch card campaign.

The National Heritage Secretary has praised this week's orgy of gambling greed as of great benefit to good causes. But if your reason for playing the lottery is truly altruistic, then your money will work four times harder if you hand it direct to charity.

Not the only national benefit of the National Lottery is to sharpen up our numeracy. To be a sensible investor in the lottery you need to know the three Rs: Reading the rollover forecast, Writing out the ticket and working out the arithmetic of probability. You might

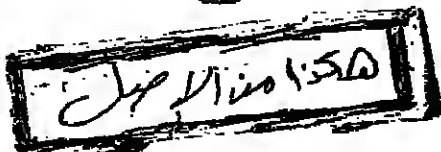
have thought you left unpleasant expressions such as 49!/(43! x 6!) behind at about the same time as Maths GCSE. You no doubt wondered what possible use those factorials might be. "6!" is not the number of free flights around America that the lottery regulator took courtesy of a Camelot shareholder, but "six factorial": 6 x 5 x 4 x 3 x 2 x 1, or 720. Calculate 43! (the number of non-winning numbers), multiply them together and use this to divide 49! and you get exactly the number of pounds you need to "invest". And if you don't believe me, save your £13,983,816 and spend a fiver on a calculator. Good luck.

Lucky Lottery numbers, page 24

Simon Calder



Buy big: £14m will guarantee you a winning ticket for the Lottery



The essential guide to the new season

Cézanne at the Tate, Pulp on tour — and Jane Austen everywhere: David Benedict on the shows you can't afford to miss

January

The Midsummer Marriage, Sir Michael Tippett's first opera, is a magnificent work, but with the notable exception of Tim Albery's revival, it has had more than its fair share of poor productions. A new version opens at Covent Garden on 16 January by Graham Vick, with Bernard Haitink conducting. Their last production together, *Die Meistersinger*, was a knockout.

Art '96 (17th) is London's leading Contemporary Art Fair and this year's exhibition at the Business Design Centre in Islington will showcase work from more than 80 commercial galleries, as well as promoting the new Wingate Young Artists awards.

Without a doubt, the film of the month is Mike Figgis's *Leaving Las Vegas* (19th), which has already romped home with critics' prizes for Best Film, Best Actor (Nicholas Cage) and Best Actress (Elisabeth Shue) in New York and L.A., and has put British director Mike Figgis back on the "A" list. It will, however, have a fight on its hands in the hype stakes as the following week sees Harrison Ford going where Bogart went before in *Sabrina Fair*, in its suitably foreboding Nineties title, *Sabrina*. A beautifully tailored Julia Ormond attempts the impossible by stepping into Audrey Hepburn's shoes. There's more Americana on display in Leeds where Opera North have unearthed Kurt Weill's forgotten Broadway musical, *Love Life* (see picture), which he wrote with Alan Jay Lerner, more famous for having penned *Porgy and Bess* and *My Fair Lady*. Doubtless, the company



hope to repeat the sell-out success of their revival of *Show Boat* a few years back.

Björk is undoubtedly Iceland's biggest export since the super-market chain, and if proof were needed that she is now an *echt* superstar, she is impersonated by Dawn French in the new *French and Saunders* BBC TV series, which continues this month. The elfin starlet, meanwhile, plays her biggest British dates yet, beginning in Sheffield (19th).

Hot on the heels of her success with *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* at the Bush Theatre, Naomi Wallace is a notable addition to the RSC's rather shabby stable of new writers. Her latest play, *Slaughter City*, opens on the 23rd, while Simon Callow's version of *Les Enfants du Paradis*, previewing at the end of the month, looks set to be the exception to a pretty dismal RSC season — apart from David Fielding's bold staging of *The Park* and Adrian Noble's *The Cherry Orchard*, which happily transfers to London later in the year.

March

Tommy, once an album, then a typically unrestrained Ken Russell film, is now a smash-hit musical thanks to a cracking Broadway production by Des McAnuff. The British production opens on the 5th. Theatre de Complicite unveil *Foe* on the 7th, an adaptation of the novel by Booker prizewinner JM Coetzee at the West Yorkshire Playhouse. March is, however, the (unofficial) Jeremy Sams month. His translation of Schiller's engrossing *Mary Stuart* opens at the National on the 21st with a drop-dead cast including Anna Massey and Isabelle Huppert, who also features in the latest Chabrol movie, *A Judgement in Stone*, based on Ruth Rendell's crime classic filmed once before (badly). Five days later, Sams's production of Sondheim's Tony Award-winning musical *Pastor Fung* opens at the Queen's Theatre (26th).

Woody Allen is back, this time playing his clarinet (honest) in a one-off gig at the Festival Hall (18th). British acting talent has been busy in Hollywood — Anthony Hopkins plays the title role in the latest epic exercise in American navel-gazing, *Oliver Stone's Nixon* (15th). Considerably shorter (a mere 81 minutes), and with more laughs comes the extraordinary *Troy Story* (22nd), the world's first completely computer-generated animated movie



from guess who? Yes, Disney.

Messrs Terfel and Elder turn up at Covent Garden in a revival of Strauss's *Arabella*, starring the great white hope of British opera singers, Amanda Roocroft, whose recordings have so far failed to hit the spot but whose dark, creamy voice is utterly luscious on stage.

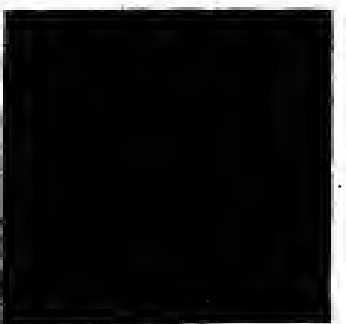
In a somewhat tardy bid for artist of the year (he died in 1960), Velasquez looks like being a hero of this, the Year of Visual Art. His "Rokeby Venus" is the centrepiece of a show at the Bowes Museum which opens the year's festivities on the 30th. Two days earlier, the British obsession with Impressionism continues with the Royal Academy's Gustave Caillebotte show (see above). Visitors to the Musée d'Orsay in Paris should recognise his work.

May

A selection of work by Mark Rothko (detail, right) turns up, a trifle unexpectedly, at the Tate St Ives gallery in an exhibition recalling the great abstract expressionist's stay there during the Fifties.

Glyndebourne opens its season on the 17th with the first ever UK staging of Handel's *Theodora*, directed by *enfant terrible* Peter Sellars, with William Christie conducting the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment.

Trisha Brown Dance Company, unseen in this country for far too long, is the highlight of this year's *Dance Umbrella* (21st), with a programme including the first British performances of the acclaimed *Set and Reset*,



danced to a score by Laurie Anderson.

American movies range from *Sergeant Bilko* (yet another TV transfer) to the exquisitely titled surprise hit *What to Do in Denver When You're Dead*.

And the best of the rest of the year...

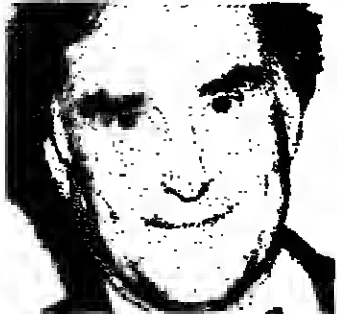
Twyla Tharp (right) returns to the Royal Ballet after her sensational *Mr Worldly-Wise* last year, this time with a new one-act work (30th July), while Northern Ballet Theatre premieres an equally untraditional work: *Dracula* (16th Sept). Prior to that comes this year's Edinburgh Festival (opens 11th Aug), which once again looks like providing most jewels in the official



festival, including Martha Graham Dance Company, Houston Grand Opera and world-class theatre. The Tate Gallery in Liverpool shows new sculptural works by Rachel Whiteread in September, and in November the V&A has a huge exhibition of American Photography from 1890-1960, taken from the impressive collection at New York's Museum of Modern Art.



Queens of comedy Victoria Wood and Julian Clary hit the road (separately) again in the autumn (dates to be confirmed). Opera Factory return to the South Bank in September with David Freeman's new production of *The Magic Flute*, and Andrew Lloyd Webber (left) revives one of his greatest hits, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, 25 years since the show's first production. The best news on the



musicals front, however, is that outgoing National Theatre director Richard Eyre (left) is reviving *Gypsies and Dolls* for Christmas. Anyone who considers that the form is beneath them should see this intoxicating, magnificently directed show, which ranks alongside the David Hare trilogy as Eyre's finest achievement. Hardly new, but likely to be one of the year's greatest hits.

February

A hot month for theatre openings with Antony Sher returning to the National as painter Stanley Spencer in *Pan Gems*'s new biographical play (1st), which also stars the ludicrously underrated Deborah Findlay. Norwich pulls off something of a coup on the same day with the premiere of *Blood Label*, a new play by Arnold Wesker — who himself hasn't exactly been flooded with offers for new work, despite being one of the angriest of young men back in the Fifties and Sixties.

The hyperactive Patrick Marber caused a big noise with his production of his first play, *Dealer's Choice*, a poker-playing comedy which transferred from the National to the West End and is set for a national tour. He now moves to the Almeida with 1953 (8th), Craig Raine's rewrite of Racine's *Phaedra* with young Olivier Award-winner Emma Fielding and Jason Isaacs, who was so impressive in *Angels in America*.

It's also a good month for dance, with *Crime Fictions* (2nd), a new piece based on film noir by Kim Brandstrup for Arc Dance Theatre; and a mixed programme from the Royal Ballet (7th) comprising new pieces by William Hart and Ashley Page, plus Kenneth MacMillan's intensely dramatic *The Invitation*, once one of the jewels in the company's crown as danced by Lynn Seymour. The Birmingham Royal Ballet, meanwhile, has what is probably a first: a ballet based on a Thomas Hardy novel. David Bintley's *Rar from the Madding Crowd* (no Julie Christie, alas) is at the Birmingham Hippodrome from the 21st.

The art show of the year will be the Tate's Cézanne show (8th), which has been packing them in during its stay in Paris. If you want to compare what was going on in more traditional circles back in England, nip up to Piccadilly for the Royal Academy show devoted to the work of Lord Leighton



(from 16th). The National Gallery also has something of a treat with a collection from the Doria Pamphilj Gallery in Rome (22nd), including important works by Caravaggio, Raphael, Lotto, Titian and Velasquez's masterly portrait of Pope Innocent X.

The much-missed Mark Elder returns to spread joy to the beleaguered English National Opera conducting *Tristan and Isolde*, which opens on the 10th — an unmissable event staged by David Alden, whose passionate interpretation of *Ariadante* (starring Ann Murray) returns later in the year. Welsh National Opera have a terrific trio lined up with *wunderkinds* Mark Wigglesworth conducting and Matthew Warcus producing Bryn Terfel in *The Rake's Progress* (17th). A treat. British cinema makes headway this month with the simultaneous release on the 23rd of *Trainspotting*, from the team that created *Shallow Grave*, and Emma Thompson writing the script for and starring in *Sense and Sensibility* (above) and pulling tremendous reviews for both jobs in the US.

Jarvis Cocker (main picture) launches himself and Pulp on a 10-date national tour beginning in Brighton on the 20th.

April

Theatre director Phyllida Lloyd returns to Opera North, home of her considerable operatic successes with her regular design partner Anthony Ward for a new production of Cherubini's *Medea* (15th), with a classy cast led by Josephine Barstow.

Unless you've done jury service, your image of the workings of the judicial system are likely to be based on Sidney Lumet's classic film (and his debut) *Twelve Angry Men*, which turns up in the West End as a stage production (22nd) directed by Harold Pinter (right). Another British actor doing things American is Helena Bonham Carter, who stars as Woody Allen's wife in his latest comedy *Mighty Aphrodite* (12th).

The finest acting of the month is expected from the luminous Julianne Moore in *Todd "Poison" Haynes's* film *Safe* (19th). Moore was impressive in *Short Cuts* and simply mesmerising in *Uncle Vanya* on 42nd Street opposite Wallace Shawn, whose play *The Designated Mourner* appears at



the National late this month, directed by David Hare.

British audiences starved of choreography by the great Mark Morris have the pleasure of seeing it danced by Les Grandes Ballets Canadiens, who tour Britain for the first time since changing direction under the new artistic directorship of Lawrence Rhodes (from 9th).

June

Leon Kossoff, who caused such a noise at the 1995 Venice Biennale, has his first retrospective at the Tate Gallery from the 6th. Director Declan Donnellan (right) joins the money-makers directing Sir Cameron Mackintosh's production of the latest musical from Boublil and Schönberg, who created *Les Misérables* and *Miss Saigon*. This time it's *Martin Guerre*, better known as the Richard Gere/Jodie Foster film *Sommersby* (11th).

The singing continues on the 13th with the world's hottest tenor in the title role of Verdi's *Don Carlos* at Covent Garden, conducted by Haitink.

How to Make an American Quilt was a surprise best-selling



novel in the States and arrives on-screen (14th) with Anne Bancroft and Winona Ryder; it's very much part of the attempt to move away from pictures that focus on men blowing each other's heads off.

arts reviews

CLASSICAL

Angelika Kirschschrager

Nick Kimberley on a young mezzo who'd do better to keep the Wolf from her door

With some justification, the Wigmore Hall audience likes to think of itself as a caring group of connoisseurs, ever on the look-out for emerging talent, which it subjects to the most exacting scrutiny and then, if it comes up to scratch, supports to the hilt. The connoisseurs and their notepads were out in force on Thursday for a recital by the young Austrian mezzo-soprano Angelika Kirschschrager. To judge from the applause, she passed the test with flying colours.

This is something of a Golden Age for young mezzos, some of them (Elcna Zarembo, Nathalie Stutzmann) going so far as to claim contralto status, perhaps to suggest that the voice-type is no mere half-shadow of a soprano, but something entirely its own. Kirschschrager isn't in that category. Although it's plenty loud enough, the voice is light and airy, the chest register transparent, with none of that exhilarating, rib-rattling toughness that, in some singers, seems to threaten the very vocal fabric even as it thrills the listener.

The suppleness of the voice is supported by a rapid vibrato, mostly attractive but occasionally intruding on vocal clarity. She opened the second half of her recital with five songs which Erich Korngold published in 1947, after he had established himself as one of Hollywood's most celebrated composers. Although clearly in the European art-song tradition, they show signs of something American. "Glückwunsch" (Congratulations) could almost be a pop song in the way the voice is made to drop at the end of each phrase, and Kirschschrager handled it with subtlety. But in "Der Kranke" (Ailing) the emotional gestures become broader, and so did Kirschschrager's vibrato, to the extent that she almost seemed to be crooning.

Not that there was anything crass in this. Quite the opposite: if Kirschschrager has a fault, it is a certain primness, both in the voice and in the platform manner. With clipped, precise support from pianist Helmut Deutsch, she sang with exactness and finesse and, of course, perfect German. She was comfortable in the serious moments of Brahms's *Five Folk Songs*, getting a real pining tone in "Es steht ein Lind" (A Lime Tree Stands). Several songs, though, call on the singer to be a flighty, flirty young thing, and here Kirschschrager came across as the nice school prefect letting her hair down at the end-of-term revue.

Most moving was Schumann's *Maria Stuart Lieder*. The voice faded away delicately as Mary bade farewell to France; then became nicely conversational in her "Abschied von der Welt", aware that over-emphasis could turn into "Goodbye, cruel world!" histrionics. She ended with 10 songs by Hugo Wolf - about half a dozen too many for this listener - and then surprised us all with a relaxed, witty and far from coy encore of Kurt Weill's *Der Abschiedsbrief* (Farewell Letter). The programme biography told us that she is planning a complete Weill recital later this year in Vienna. "More Weill, less Wolf" is not a bad rule for any singer, say I.

TELEVISION Cybill / Roseanne (C4)

Cybill Shepherd is back as a woman in her forties with a truculent teenage daughter and an ex or two. But is she a match for Roseanne? By Jasper Rees



The joke underpinning 'Cybill' is the treachery of middle age, though the rotting process seems to slow for Hollywood ladies like Ms Shepherd

In the slipstream of *Roseanne* and *Ellen* comes *Cybill*, another US sitcom that unabashedly advertises the female star at the wheel of the vehicle. There's an odd opposition going on here. Britcom titles are so much zippier: it's the scripts that routinely underestimate an audience's intelligence. American sitcoms, a high percentage of which are sassy and self-believing, have reductive titles that work like brand names. Imagine *Absolutely Fabulous* as *Jennifer*, or *The Vicar of Dibley* as *Dawn*. We just wouldn't stand for it (remember *Tam and Jane*?) In the States, though, *Roseanne* by any other name would not smell as sweet.

The letters of *Cybill*'s surname have been half-heartedly shuffled to change Shepherd into Sheridan, but an actress who made her name in *The Last Picture Show* is now cashing in on it. *Cybill* is also an actress whose last picture is an ancient folk memory. Pre-signature tune, we meet her playing a vampire's victim in a slice of dire TV schlock. Cast as a corpse, she keeps corpsing. Put it down to pre-mortem teasing.

The joke underpinning *Cybill* is the treachery of middle age. Salient among the signs of encroaching cronehood are her daughter's announcement of a forthcoming grandchild, her date's inability to get it up, and her ex's attachment to an air-head. Shepherd has said that her age, over 40 and counting, is the best time to be a woman, but then the rotting process seems to decelerate for Hollywood's misleading ladies. This

is the West Coast, where vanity hires the surgeon's knife to defy gravity.

Cybill the character (I plead ignorance concerning the actress) hasn't had a boob job, while her richer sidekick who can afford one is even more self-pitying. Maryann, aspirally played by Christine Baranski, is perhaps the more rounded comic creation, and gets the best lines: "If I had a nickel for every time my ex-husband couldn't perform..." she says. "Well, actually, I do."

The sitcom that doesn't get off to a slow start is a generic freak. Tuning in for the first time, the viewer might have felt like the impotent date *Cybill* introduced to a gathering of husbands and daughters, but with some characters, you got along right away. We met teenage troublemaker Zoey at the piano, teasing some overblown nocturne from the ivories. When her mother came in, she reverted to her role of sullen numbskull and plinked out a charmless infantile ditty. Before she'd said a line, you had her number.

Lucy Gorranson, who took a sabbatical from *Roseanne* to attend college, re-entered as Becky after three years away. They got a laugh out of it, as you'd expect of a show where reality and fiction are so snugly snug. In series eight, *Roseanne* is carrying a new character in her womb, but its arrival would be so much more provoking if either Darlene or Becky could lay on the grandchild, like the one upsetting *Cybill*.

RADIO

My Father Said to Me (Radio 4)

Parental advice to small children never changes, it seems. By Robert Hanks

You can try as hard as you like not to listen to what your parents tell you; it will catch up with you in the end. The subject of yesterday morning's *My Father Said to Me* was the advice that parents give their children and the way that it can stick in the mind, overcoming all adult reason and education. "Comic policemen, so to speak," suggested Edward Blishen, "plodding the streets in the moral quarters of our being."

Blishen is now 75, and is still haunted by the Keystone Kops homilies that his parents inflicted on him; he may no longer think that you can judge a man's character by the shininess of his shoes, but he's still unable to bear dirty fingernails. Listening to his amused, thankful response to parental injunction, 60 years after the fact, you saw the force of the police analogy: like policemen, these nuggets of advice may seem hostile and oppressive when you're young; but as you get older, their presence starts to seem reassuring.

The same mixture of gratitude and amusement was evident, too, in the recollections of the anonymous voices that appeared on the programme - they had had drummed into them the same values of thrift, chastity and politeness that Blishen had. Still, there was an odd mismatch between these off-the-cuff vox pops and Blishen's more studied, literary style.

To begin with, the contrast was disconcerting to the listener, and not flattering to Blishen: his commentary sounded contrived, and his attitude to the other speakers - "My voices", he called them - a touch patrician; it might have been better to have identified them individually. But those reservations were washed away, bit by bit. The tone was so sweet and thoughtful that it began to feel not so much off-key as quirky and fresh, a change from the self-consciously unvarnished style that's habitually applied to oral history on the radio.

In any case, this wasn't history as the term is usually understood; although the memories were drawn from a roughly circumscribed period, there was no attempt to pass this off as a picture of family relationships before the war. Rather, it was a denial of history, a sequence of proofs that there aren't any differences between the past and present: the same truisms get passed on, and while small things change, nothing really progresses.

One particular incident emphasised the point: remembering her mother's insistence that you should always have a vest on (in case of accident), one of Blishen's voices pointed out how much stricter an injunction that was in the days before washing-machines - "In those days they didn't change vests and that every day of the week, like they do today. Mind you, they don't wear them today, do they?" And then, trailing off: "Anyway, where's my pocket handkerchief?" There was an inconsequentiality about this, a sense that outside the little envelope of these memories life just carries on, that seemed to catch the heart of the programme: and it did have plenty of heart.



KEY



EXCELLENT



GOOD



OK



POOR



DREAD

THE OPERA
LUIA MILLER

overview

Tim Albery directs an Opera North production of Verdi's somewhat neglected tragedy with Susanah Glenville, Arthur Davies and Alan Opie, conducted by Paul Daniel.

critical view

Antony Peattie was clear: "Daringly cast, fearlessly staged... unforgettable... travel to see it now." Paul Daniel and the Opera North team get to the heart of the work," cheered the *Sunday Times*. "Audiences have some glorious, unfamiliar Verdi to look forward to," agreed the *Financial Times*. "Another fine achievement for Paul Daniel... a virtually unspeakable production," scoffed the *Telegraph*.

on view

At the Grand Theatre, Leeds (0113-245 93511, 9 and 11 Jan, followed by a tour.

our view

Don't be put off just because you don't know it. Stirring stuff.

THE PLAY
THE DUCHESS OF MALFI

Anastasia Hille and Scott Handy star as dangerous siblings in Webster's magnificent Jacobean tragedy in Cheek by Jowl's production directed by Declan Donnellan and designed by Nick Ormerod.

Paul Taylor was bowled over: "Anastasia Hille is simply electrifying... essential viewing." Unforgettable... Hille leaves no doubt that she is a major star in the making," eulogised the *Telegraph*. "Extraordinary, bordering on astonishing," exulted the *Times*. "Striking, but more than a little schematic," worried the *Financial Times*. "Something is seriously wrong... steer well clear," warned the *Daily Express*.

At Wyndham's Theatre, London WC2 (0171-369 1736) to 27 Jan, before resuming a world tour.

Revelatory and unmissable, even if you only just saw the previous production at the same address last year.

THE EXHIBITION
JAMES ABBE

"Lure of the Limelight", an exhibition of celebrity portraits by the 1920s American photographer, including Valentino, Chaplin, Mae West, Cecil B De Mille, Ronald Colman and Josephine Baker.

"His ability to impart something of the essence of the sitter marks out Abbe's better work from the gloss of the fan club photograph," wrote Iain Gale. "There are unforgettable pictures here... he was able to capture them looking like human beings, in moments of relaxation," praised the *Times*. "On a novelty and curiosity level the exhibition is enjoyable," sniffed the *Guardian*.

At the National Portrait Gallery, St Martin's Place, London WC2 (0171-306 0055) to 24 March.

Go for the Tinseltown portraits. His 1930s photojournalism is less interesting.

THE FILM
SEVEN

David "Allen 3" Fincher's serial-killer thriller, more *Eraserhead* than *Lethal Weapon* 15, based around the seven deadly sins and starring the screen's favourite young hunk, Brad Pitt.

Shelia Johnston was impressed: "It will be a very good year if *Seven* doesn't make it on to my 10-best list." "One of the darkest, most intelligent American thrillers in a long time," cheered *Time Out*. "It's a long time since Hollywood came up with goods like this," agreed the *Evening Standard*. "Leaves a brackish taste in the mouth," warned the *Guardian*. "Demands attention," concluded the *Times*.

Odeon Leicester Square (0171-930 3232) and on general release.

This squeamish should probably give it a miss. Everyone else, go.



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DICKIE FANTASTIC on the schmoose

Charity begins at wonderful parties

The last thing Mrs Dorothy Willerton wants to do is advertise her charitable works to the broadsheet newspapers. Or even *Talkin'*. If she wants (or even needs) to spend New Year's Day with friends ("some of them are titled") giving food to poor people on The Strand and Lincoln's Inn Fields, that is her business. "We don't do it for our own egotistical benefit," she says. "I am only allowing one journalist to witness tonight's Charitable Food Run. I'm sorry, but the lady from *The Lady* got there first." "Please can I come?" I whimper. "I'll bring happiness to millions of Independent readers."

"Oh," says Mrs Willerton. "OK." There are 12 of us, trudging up toward Holborn, carrying little hampers of leftovers - left over from wonderful parties the likes of which we can only dream of. Nine are driven philanthropists (driven by an inner need they just can't describe) and three are journalists (two ladies from *The Lady* and me). Of the philanthropists, three are titled and all are from old money. "No," says Mrs Willerton, "we don't let in the nouveau. I know their food is good enough, I know their hearts are big enough, but these are my friends, don't you see? We are doing our bit without drawing attention to ourselves."

"I was furious," adds Mrs Banceaux. "When I heard a man from the *Independent* was coming, I don't want to be in the paper. We just want to help the poor homeless people. But not all of them. Some choose to be homeless. We only help those who have no choice." "How can you differentiate?" I ask. "Oh, come on," says Mrs Banceaux. "You can tell just by looking at them." We find our first homeless person in the doorway of TGI Fridays. He is young, and Mrs Banceaux whispers to me that he may be the sort of voluntary

slacker she was talking about. "He's not mad. He's not drunk. He's fit as an oxen." "So are you not going to give him any food?" "No," she says, softly. "The benefit of doubt. That's the Christian way." With a look of deep profundity, she bends down and hands him a little hamper of leftovers. "Yeah, cheers," says the homeless man. "Cheers, yeah." "Where are you from?" says Mrs Willerton. "Newcastle, cheers," says the homeless man. "Long way from home," says Mrs Willerton. "Oh well, Goodbye." "Yeah," he says. "Cheers."

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Keeping an eye on the future

A rag-bag of reviews by a master fabulist yields up some startling predictions. By DJ Taylor

One had assumed a major casualty of the Nineties publishing recession to have been the ragbag of old book reviews and "pieces" by famous names. But no, clearly someone at HarperCollins has decided there is mileage in collecting three decades' worth of J.G. Ballard's occasional journalism between hard covers, giving it a portentous title (to include age-old reviews of books about Scott Fitzgerald in something called *A User's Guide To The Millennium* is a piece of cheek even by the standards of this unhappy genre) and shoving it out onto the torpid post-Christmas market.

This isn't for a moment to disparage Ballard's merits as a writer, or his acuteness as a cultural commentator (more of which later), simply to wonder whether we need his views on Franz Kafka in all their 100-word glory (reprinted from the *Sunday Times*, 1993) or the 250-word encomium of Joyce which graced the pages, or rather a very small section of one page, of the *Guardian* some time in 1990. Or, for that matter, his affliction by the usual maladies common to book reviewers. One of the hazards of writing lots of literary journalism is that you start to repeat yourself. Ballard does this with eye-catching regularity. Some remarks about *Star Wars* first minted for *Time Out* in 1977 turn up again in the *Daily Telegraph* in 1993. A description of his time in a Japanese intern's camp, first produced for the *Daily Telegraph* in 1991, resurfaces four years later in the *Sunday Times*.

One of the worst things you can say about a writer, of course, is that he or she is a good book reviewer, but Ballard is never less than readable on the very mixed bag of subjects that various literary editors have offered up for his delectation in the past thirty years. This is despite his sneaking fondness for the Henry Millers and the William Burroughses — all that old, discredited hippy gang who exert such an enduring fascination on this side of the Atlantic. Where he comes into his stride, though, and where the book narrowly begins to justify its title, is in the handful of pieces grouped under the heading "Science".

In retrospect Ballard's presence about scientific, or more accurately technological, development seems monstrously acute. Like H.G. Wells talking to an audience of the 1900s, he gives the impression not only of knowing what the future will be like ("Almost anything we care to say about the future will probably come true," he suggests at one point, "and sooner than we think") but of actually relishing its arrival.

This attitude is rarer than it sounds. Most intelligent people are not particularly interested in "the future", simply accepting its gadgetry as and when it arrives. Ballard, by contrast, falls into that comparatively small category of

A User's Guide to the Millennium: Essays and Reviews by J.G. Ballard HarperCollins £18

persons who are enraptured by the soulless cityscapes along the horizon, who conduct a kind of love affair with the concrete and skyscraper aspects of modern life, that coalesces him to remark, without obvious irony, of the ghastliness of the redeveloped Thames Valley: "For me, this inter-urban landscape, of marinas, research labs, hypermarkets and industrial parks represents the most hopeful face of Britain at the end of the century." More important, perhaps, is that Ballard was saying these things a quarter of a century ago. The piece on cars, first aired in *Drive* magazine in 1971, reads as if it were a year or two old, while an essay on "The Future of the Future", which I'd assumed to be nearly contemporary, dates from as long ago as 1977.

The key word in any consideration of Ballard's prose, fictional or otherwise, is "denatured". It is difficult not to believe that his own personal period of denaturing — the two adolescent years spent in the intern's camp near Shanghai — isn't in some way responsible for this obsession with artificial environments, entropy and all the rest of the 21st-century SF package. The pieces of autobiography and the reviews of books with an indirect link to his own early life (for example a biography of Hirohito) are invariably the most interesting, not only in terms of their content but because of the clues they supply as to motivation. "The resolution of the wounded mind gives hope to us all," he writes at one point. Ballard's wartime experience imparts one singular twist of his habitual Left-liberal world view: he finds the idea that the dropping of the A-bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki was an immoral act, "wholly baffling".

"I think there should be more sex and violence on television, not less. Both are powerful catalysts of social change at a time when change is desperately needed..." "How to improve London? Launch a crash programme to fill the city with pirate TV stations, nightclubs, brothels and porn parlours." *A User's Guide* is full of spirited nonsense of this kind. The effect, though, is oddly exhilarating — like watching some shy and diffident old uncle suddenly letting his hair down at a party, but with a sober self-consciousness that somehow lends the gesture a redeeming charm. As well as the precision and the clear autobiographer's eye, we should also value J.G. Ballard for his sense of humour.

Gothic vaults and kitchen pans

Was the art of the high Renaissance born of cultural purity or plurality? Bruce Boucher reports

Court, Cloister and City: The Art and Culture of Central Europe, 1450-1800 by Thomas Da Costa Kaufmann Weidenfeld £25

Twenty years ago, Jan Bialostocki, a Polish art historian, published a book on the Renaissance, one which did not centre on Italy or France but took Eastern Europe as its subject. A survivor from the pre-war order, he wanted to demonstrate the rich cultural developments experienced in Prague and Krakow under the Jagellonian dynasty and in Buda under the enlightened Hungarian monarch, Matthias Corvinus. There was, however, a subtext to his book, for Bialostocki was also protesting against the marginalisation of Eastern Europe in the larger history of European culture as witnessed by its virtual exclusion from modern surveys such as the *Pelican History of Art*.

Thomas Da Costa Kaufmann's magisterial *Court, Cloister and City* was prompted by similar historical and geographical concerns, chiefly the impact of the *annus mirabilis* of 1989-90 on our perception of Europe as an entity. The dissolution of the Warsaw Pact regimes and the resurgence of ethnic antagonisms have once more revealed the cultural mosaic of Central and Eastern Europe that had been largely suppressed for four decades. Kaufmann's study is not only informed by recent events, but also sees them as a key to understanding the formation of Central European culture, from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment. The timespan is vast and the book covers a significant tract, ranging from the old Polish commonwealth to the major and minor German states as well as Austria and Hungary. At its heart is a portrait of the old Holy Roman Empire, that broad confederation of *Mittel Europa* presided over by Austrian Habsburg emperors and the source of some of the greatest artistic achievements of the post-medieval era.

Kaufmann's primary focus is the reception of the Renaissance across Central Europe, but his is not the customary comparison of northern artefacts with a putative, Italianate ideal. Instead, he sees

the hybridity of most Central European art and architecture as an end in itself. Thus, the fusion of gothic vaulting and renaissance detail in the Prague castle should be understood as negotiating the expectations of tradition — the golden age of Bohemia under Charles IV — with the dynastic ambitions of the Jagellonian court. It is also what one would expect from a German mason working for a Polish king in the capital of Bohemia.

Kaufmann interprets such hybridity as a positive force in Central European art, enabling cultural differences to be addressed and in some sense reconciled. Such a conclusion may seem blindingly obvious, but it took the events of 1989 and their aftermath to lend this kind of perspective to the cross-currents of earlier European history. Pluralism becomes a leitmotif of *Court, Cloister and City*, and it allows the author to invert normal expectations — as when he observes that Durer, often evoked as the quintessential German artist, may have been ethnically Hungarian.

Diversity and the fluidity of boundaries also surfaces in Kaufmann's discussion of the Reformation, in which he reminds us that artists such as Cranach worked for Protestant and Catholic patrons alike or that Lutheran churches in Prague were based upon Roman models while Catholic churches in Carinthia were adapted Protestant ones.

The great example of successful hybridity came with the court of the Habsburg emperor Rudolf II in Prague. There, at the turn of the 17th century, artists as diverse as Arcimboldo, Spranger and de Vries created a court style that not



Branching out: Arcimboldo's 'Winter' showed a bold new court style that transcended its models

Picture: Louvre

only reflected Italian models but transformed them. An indifferent politician, Rudolf excelled as a patron, actively intervening in artistic projects, as when he directed the painter Rodant Savery to draw rare species for his still-lives which are among the earliest produced in Europe. But the bizarre constructs of the Milanese artist Arcimboldo are probably the most characteristic examples of Rudolf's taste. Their combination of inanimate objects to create portraits — a cook from pots and pans, the emperor as Vertumnus, god of the seasons, from fruits and flowers — reflect the intricate intellectual content and refinement common to

Prague art of the period.

If Rudolf II assumes a pivotal role in Kaufmann's book, his achievements are kept in perspective by the survey of the arts in the old Reich and Poland during the 18th century. The defeat of the Turks at Vienna in 1683 lent a new confidence to the Habsburgs and their allies which was readily translated into new palaces and monasteries. Added stimulus came from Versailles and the patronage of Louis XIV. The emergence of a new imperial style sought its inspiration in Italy and France but surpassed its models in grandeur and audacity as any visitor to Melk or Würzburg can verify. The efflo-

rescence lasted for a century, and proved a glorious swansong to the old order. The forces that led to the French Revolution set in train the demise of the Polish Republic by 1795 and the Holy Roman Empire a decade later.

The Reich may not have been, in Voltaire's words, either holy, Roman, or an empire, but its merits lay in an openness to cultural diversity and the dispersal of power rather than its centralisation. Ironically, the conditions that ultimately made the Empire weak had been its strength. Kaufmann's book shows that this same blend of strengths and weaknesses have much to tell us about the state of Central Europe today.

Jewish sunset, Jewish sunrise

Is European Jewry doomed to extinction? David Goldberg predicts an upsurge of interest in the ancient faith

A characteristic of being Jewish, perhaps due to our long history of rootlessness, is that each succeeding generation tends to think, *Après moi le déluge*.

The Biblical prophets were convinced that they were addressing generations doomed to destruction: the ancient rabbis produced their first great legal code, the Mishnah, because they feared that Jewish law would otherwise be forgotten; nearly a thousand years after them, Moses Maimonides produced his great compendium of Jewish law because he was convinced that he represented the last generation of

Jewish scholarship; the 1492 exiles from Spain lamented a golden age lost for ever.

Five hundred years, several persecutions, pogroms and the Nazi Holocaust later, the Jewish people survive and fellow Jews still write their obituary notices. Recently, *The Golden Chain* by Norman Cantor, confidently predicted the imminent disappearance of American and European Jewry, and the State of Israel as well.

Not to be outdone, Bernard Wasserstein has produced his own melancholy lament, *Vanishing Diaspora*; but as befits a Brit, he is Hugh Grant diffident rather than

Vanishing Diaspora: The Jews in Europe since 1945 by Bernard Wasserstein Hamish Hamilton, £20

Bruce Willis brash. Unlike Cantor's global extinction, Wasserstein merely predicts the slow but sure sunset of European Jewry.

Vanishing Diaspora is an engagingly-written survey, longer on generalisations and anecdote than on hard facts. Wasserstein's conclusions are

that the demographic outlook for European Jewry is bleak, that we are witnessing the withering away of Judaism as a spiritual component in the lives of most Jews, and that there is no longer "an authentic Jewish culture in Europe". Hardly surprising, one might be inclined to retort, after two out of every three European Jews died as a result of Hitler's genocide.

There is, though, a Jewish revival of a different kind going on in eastern and central Europe today which Wasserstein overlooks. Who is a Jew? he asks, then offers in answer either the traditional rabbinic definition of a

person born of a Jewish mother, which he finds too restrictive, or Jean-Paul Sartre's aphorism that a Jew is anyone whom anti-Semites take to be one, which he considers too elastic.

In fact, there is a third definition, one which accords more realistically both with the Jewish experience in Europe since the Enlightenment, and with contemporary perceptions in post-Communist societies. It is this: a Jew is someone who regards himself or herself as Jewish. That is why, in the liberal democracies of western Europe, where marriage out of the faith is as high as 50 per

cent, the children of such marriages often choose to define themselves as Jewish; and why, in countries like the former Soviet Union or Czechoslovakia, where religion was banned, there has been a tremendous upsurge of interest among the young in the faith and practices of their ancestors.

In modern Europe there are other ways of being a Jew than by religion or Zionism. Wasserstein is reluctant to acknowledge this, and thereby blithely writes off the future of a people that has survived in Europe for 2,000 years by virtue of resilience and adaptability.

A passion for the Union

A new biography of Abraham Lincoln suggests that the American Civil War need not have happened. Frank McLynn begs to differ

What, yet another Lincoln book to add to the 6,000 or so extant? In one sense it turns there is nothing to fear, as the new-comer is distinctive and original. But it is so in all the wrong ways. The book has no subtitle, but an apt one would be *Anglo-Saxon empiricism and its limitations*. In other words, Professor Donald's book has all the virtues of professional historical scholarship — meticulous — and exhaustive research, a deep knowledge of the subject, and a fervent commitment to the historiographical debates about the Civil War period. What it lacks is a broader context, a sense of mythology and the irrational and, most importantly, psychological insight.

A good way to see Donald's book in perspective is to contrast the "old" and "new" views of Lincoln. The old view — with whom we associate very much in the multi-volume biography by the poet Carl Sandburg and the movies of John Ford and others — goes like

Lincoln by David Herbert Donald Cape, £30

this "Old Abe" went from log cabin to White House; he was a crackpot barrel philosopher and a backwoods lawyer who came out of the wilderness to defeat Senator Douglas in a memorable series of debates in 1858 ("a house divided against itself will fall"); he fought the Civil War to liberate the slaves and was thus acclaimed as a demigod by the blacks; he made the greatest speech of all time with the Gettysburg Address; finally he was murdered by the lone assassin John Wilkes Booth.

The new or revisionist view stresses that Lincoln was a compromise candidate for the presidency in 1860; his performance in the Lincoln-Douglas debates in 1858 was not all that impressive; he was a natural autocrat who

relished wartime as it gave him the opportunity to suspend *habeas corpus* and other civil rights at will; far from being a champion of the blacks, he wanted to ship them all back to Africa; and he was assassinated as the result of a conspiracy by the radical Republicans, probably masterminded by the Secretary of War Edwin Stanton. Oh, and by the way, the Civil War was not fought on the issue of slavery at all. It was a socio-economic conflict between a primary-producing, free trading South and an industrial and protectionist North.

How does Donald's book relate to all this? It is a bit like Paddy Ashdown, in that sometimes it leans to one side and sometimes to the other. So, for example, on one hand Donald is a "lone assassin" man, he has no truck with economic explanations for the Civil War, and he concedes Lincoln his Gettysburg greatness. On the other, he accepts the charge of wartime atrocity and of Lincoln's political incorrectness

towards what he anachronistically calls "African-Americans" (the slaves could only become "African-Americans" once Lincoln had abandoned his repatriation plans and instead issued the Emancipation Proclamation). On the Lincoln-Douglas debates he is plain confusing, declaring one moment that they changed nothing, the next that they turned Lincoln into a national hero.

Donald's most controversial conclusion is that the Civil War was not inevitable. Both the "old" and "new" views concurred in thinking it was, but disagreed about whether the basic cause was slavery or an irreconcilable clash of regional economic interests. Donald appears to think that it was Lincoln's ineptitude in his first month in office that led to the Fort Sumter crisis and that, had events in 1860-61 worked out differently, there might have been no fratricidal blood-letting. This is probably the most difficult counterfactual thesis any historian could set him-

self to sustain and, perhaps wisely, Donald makes no serious attempt to do so. But this tendency in that direction does alert us to a peculiarity about his portrait of Lincoln. This is not so much a "warts and all" picture but, with the exception of the odd nod to Gettysburg, it's warts, the whole warts and nothing but the warts.

According to Donald, Lincoln's most salient attribute was his luck. He was chosen as Republican candidate in 1860 because the Convention did not want to opt either for a radical Republican with an uncompromising attitude towards the South or for those candidates who were perceived as being "soft" on the South. Then in the Presidential contest proper, he was handed the election on a plate because the Democrats split between Douglas and Breckinridge; Lincoln ended with less than 40 per cent of the popular vote but a clear majority in the electoral college.

The Civil War section of the

book is a severe disappointment. Donald concentrates on Lincoln's relations with his generals, Cabinet Ministers, the Supreme Court and the media but never conveys any sense of a great nation convulsed by the most traumatic conflict in its history. The effect is rather like reading a biography of Winston Churchill which eschews Alamein, Stalingrad and Overlord in favour of the Beveridge Report and Churchill's wrangles with the *Daily Mirror*. Because Lincoln as the binder-up of the nation's psychic wounds has a very low profile in Donald's account, the result is to make us wonder how Lincoln ever came to be seen as America's greatest President.

I suspect part of the trouble may be Donald's strait-laced respect for archival research, to the detriment of broader cultural, mythological, semiological or psychological insights. Why, for example, was Lincoln obsessed with the idea of "union"? Why did his determination that the Southern

states not be allowed to secede from the Union take on the dimensions of a religious crusade? Why did he famously state that if he could save the Union by freeing all the slaves, he would do that, or if he could save it by freeing none, he would do that, or by freeing some and leaving others as slaves he would do that also? Charles Strozier wrote a brilliant book about this aspect of the Lincoln psyche; Donald does not consider it a question worth addressing.

Professor Donald has written eleven books about Lincoln and the Civil War. It may seem churlish to be so unenthusiastic about this summation of his lifetime's work but this book is a long way from the definitive Abe biography. If Donald's Lincoln were the real Lincoln, we should be justified in asking what all the fuss has been about ever since 1865. This is a work that will appeal to professional scholars only; the general reader is likely to be left disappointed and dispirited.

books

All you need to know about
the books you meant to read



by Gavin
Griffiths

This week:

THE TRIAL (1925)
by Franz Kafka

Plot: As a German-speaking Jew living in the Prague of the fading Austro-Hungarian Empire, Kafka understood and explored alienation. This short, unrevised novel juggles socio-political protest, paranoid (sometimes erotic) fantasy and quasi-religious parable in a way which is simultaneously gratifyingly neurotic and icily detached.

"Someone must have been telling lies about Joseph K. for without having done anything wrong he was arrested one fine morning". The core of the story is exposed in the off-beam wit of the casual opening sentence. Joseph K. is a thirty-year-old hank clerk with a touch of Hamlet and more than a dash of Buster Keaton. After interrogation, he is allowed to resume work providing that he promises to attend the Court-house. His visits prove barren. In the second half of the novel, it becomes increasingly difficult to disentangle K's warped perceptions from outward reality. However, he seeks a solution – and absolution – in Love, Art and Religion.

Leni, an excitable nurse, informs K that guilty men are often sexier than innocent ones. Titorelli, a painter of judges, offers the cheery opinion that nobody is ever acquitted and that the Court's pronouncements are just devious techniques for deferring sentence. Finally, the priest tells the parable of the man from the country who waited outside the door of the Law. The doorkeeper refuses to let him in and the man's life drifts away. Near death, he asks the doorkeeper why, if all seek the Law, no one else ever turned up. The doorkeeper explains that this particular door is intended only for the countryman; he then promptly slams it shut in the supplicant's face. K and the priest puzzle over this one.

The book ends with K murdered "like a dog". As he loses consciousness he sees a distant human figure who may be a friend or a tormentor. K never meets the Judge nor sees the High Court.

Theme: Kafka sees mankind caught between guilt and the Law. Guilt is a constant prickly heat; the Law is distant, vindictive, arbitrary and merciless. Throughout his experience, K struggles to assert some form of dignity. Although the struggle ends in tragedy it usually collapses into grim farce. The moment that K picks up the rules of the game, the rules are altered.

Style: The prose is luminously uncluttered. Devoid of metaphor, the deadpan directness is often at odds with the bizarre events described. Humour and horror are woven into a cruel, seamless synthesis. The narrative is a labyrinth of parable which both invites and mocks interpretation.

Chief strengths: "He over whom Kafka's wheels have passed has lost forever any peace with the world" (T.W. Adorno). Kafka fuses his metaphysical vision to his boredom and his crazy personality to reproduce a nightmare where senseless incidents, words and gestures are rationalised without being remotely understood.

Chief weakness: Indirectly, Kafka can be preachy. Walter Benjamin argued that Kafka was like Confucius, but a Confucius bereft of a cultured audience to instruct; therefore Kafka's didacticism was illegitimately turned into "art".

What they thought of it then: Kafka believed the book a failure and asked his friend Max Brod to burn the manuscript. In the Thirties the Nazis were delighted to comply with his wishes, throwing all the writer's works on the bonfire.

What we think of it now: Critics cannot leave the book alone. Like a wall of highly polished marble, *The Trial* cannot be scaled and tends to reflect the preoccupations of the onlooker. W.H. Auden suggested that Kafka stands in relation to our own age as Dante and Goethe stood in relation to theirs.

Responsible for: Borges's elliptical fictions, Beckett's boring tramps and Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Unconscious*. Also the word "Kafkaesque" which, according to George Steiner, exists in over a hundred languages.

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The culture of barbarism

George Steiner is the most passionate and erudite of critics, but is he too grand to be true? By Robert Winder



A high priest of literature: George Steiner lecturing in Oxford, 1984. Picture: Tom Pilstou

No Passion Spent: Essays 1970-96 by George Steiner, Faber £19.99

The Depths of the Sea and other fiction by George Steiner, Faber £12.99

The first essay in George Steiner's new volume of criticism is a discussion (brilliant, of course) of the painting on the cover. It is by the 18th century Frenchman Jean-Baptiste Simeon Chardin, and shows a philosopher, sporting opulent red and gold robes and a flamboyant fur hat, poring over a fat volume on his desk. Steiner sees in this image a striking illustration of the act of reading: in the man's clothes and posture he finds a poignant courtliness. Reading, in this Utopia, is a ceremonious ritual; a book is not something to curl up with, or an excuse for a lie-down, but a formal occasion that calls for serious dressing up. Citing Meacock's quip about people who think they are emancipated but are really only unwhitened, Steiner calls for schools of creative reading to encourage the quiet contemplation of words. It is rather a moving plea, even if, in summary, it sounds merely like a blast against slovenly modern manners. Writers who urge us to read more tend to be accused, in these suspicious times, of having a vested interest. And there is indeed a sense in which Steiner seems to castigate the rest of us for not being more like him. His own eager erudition gives him, perhaps, something of the loneliness of the explorer. Nearly every page hums with references to Socrates, Plato, Kierkegaard, Tolstoy, Wittgenstein, Heidegger, the Bible, Shakespeare, Kafka and Homer – it is pretty certain that anyone reading (or reviewing) his work will be less learned

than himself. Perhaps he is simply pleading for the rest of us to keep up, so that he has someone to talk to. Few people would dare such an uncompromising defence of high literacy, but Steiner's zeal – "passion" is his chosen word – is persuasive and infectious. Reading him is like consulting your conscience: he never stops making a thrilling case for all those books we keep meaning to read some day. It is telling, however, that his analysis of the painting chooses not to mention the fact that the man in the picture is not actually reading: he is posing for a picture. Steiner talks of his "full engagement" with the text, but in truth he looks like a man forcing himself not to look up and give the game away. It might well be a mark of reading's high status in former times that painters should wish to present it with such pomp – any sociologist would find it an inevitable product of a time when reading was a rich man's game. Steiner unfashionably insists on taking the image literally, as the representation of a state of mind and a way of life, as if it were capturing an unguarded moment. But a true reader, in command of the strenuous absorption accorded to him by Steiner, would never dream of letting a painter fuss away in the corner while he studied. This is precisely the kind of criticism Steiner least likes – nit-picking, clever-clogs pedantry with no aim other than to subvert the grandeur of art. His own approach has little time for such narcissistic quibbling. The pseudo-scientific theorising which comprises

the present critical fashion is a sign of impotence, he feels, and worse, a symptom of a prevailing nihilism. Steiner has a wide evangelical streak: in an age where culture is seen as a leisure-lifestyle option, like watching TV only harder, he insists that literature matters, that it is a high and solemn (though ambiguous and comic) manifestation of humanity's creative power. Artistic creations are to him concrete facts ("real presences" in his phrase) which we neglect at our peril. Throughout his career, in both fiction and non-fiction, he remains haunted by a central conundrum in western civilisation: how can the Judeo-Christian tradition which produced such soul-stirring and noble work also have produced the Holocaust? This is the philosophical dilemma which all his reading and writing strives to address. Not content to see this horrendous fact merely as a paradox, he insists that it is not a paradox at all – that there is something in the love of high art which actually inspires barbarism. This sombre proposal flies in the face of the Victorian conviction that literature is good for you. Like many 19th century reflexes, this one has survived obstinately into our own age. Indeed, the idea of classic art as therapeutic might even be one of the reasons for its relative unpopularity. We assume that things which are good for us must be hard to swallow – like bitter medicine – and so approach masterpieces with reluctant obedience. Steiner isn't like that. He is on famil-

iar terms with the greats, in their own languages. It is not that he drops names; he has a wonderfully safe pair of hands and catches nearly everything. But there is a certain strutting vigour in the recall of genius in these pages. All the time, though, beneath the dizzy web of cultural cross-reference, Steiner sounds a continuous bass note of humanist concern. Whether in his fine, if dreadfully titled, novella *The Portage to San Christobel of A.H.*, his wonderfully supple consideration of the arguments against Shakespeare, his far-reaching tribute to Kafka, or the many philosophical debates in his fiction, he never ceases to regard literature as an aspect of life, rather than the other way around. These essays reveal him to be, apart from everything else, a vibrant narrator of the tragedy of Judaism. His interest is in the relations between words and the world, the relations between man and God (or godlessness) and the relations between civilisation and brutality. There aren't many critics, if any, who combine an attentiveness to the minutiae of texts with so powerful and broad a central thrust. Nor is he some ivory tower-monger trying to sell the virtues of high culture. Many times in these essays he sneers at "the retreat of literature into museum cabinets". And much as he hates the fast-food culture, he still permits one of the characters in his superb short story "Proofs" to defend it: "I wonder whether even these things are inflicting on man a fraction of the pain, of the despair which all our

Athens, all our high culture have inflicted. They rocked around the clock not long ago to raise millions for charity. They lectured on Kant and played Schubert and went off the same day to stuff thousands into gas ovens." These hard thoughts occasionally emerge sounding a bit rum. In his fiction, especially, Steiner gives his characters dialogue which veers from the rabbinical to the everyday with something like tipsiness. The climactic speech of Adolf Hitler in *The Portage*, the devastating apologia in which he claims to have been responsible for the rebirth of Israel, is inspired as well as clever, but at other times people help themselves to a "safter of brandy", say "Bleeding Jesus" or "make a hash" of things. When he stoops to idiom, we can almost sense Steiner holding his nose. The dialectical arguments are brilliantly plotted and sustained, but characters rarely leap from the page, however fast their minds race. Still, in his fiction, every bit as much as in his elaborately wordy essays, there is always the unmistakable sense of language under pressure from thought, of a man pushing words uphill, up to where the light is. One can nit-pick, but these two fresh volumes remind us of his singular, forceful excellence. Maybe the nicest thing about him is that he pays us the compliment of presuming everyone to be as preoccupied with the central questions of our contemporary writers or thinkers can that be said?

Miss Anna's feeling for mud

The master of Danish magic realism is back... with his first novel. Hugo Barnacle furrows his brow

This is the third of Peter Hoeg's novels to be published here, following *Miss Smilla's Feeling for Snow* and *Bordertown*, but it was the first to be written, and originally appeared in Denmark in 1988. Anyone looking for a metaphysical thriller à la *Smilla* will be disappointed, as it is a magical-realist family saga, but this genre still attracts plenty of customers, if the sales of Salman Rushdie's latest effort are anything to go by.

The rules dictate that the story covers three generations – grandparents, parents and narrator – because that is the extent of most people's family history. Hoeg is mildly unusual in paying thorough attention to both sides of the family, an approach which takes up so much space that the narrator himself only gets born in the closing pages. There is no central character. First we hear about Carl Laurids, scheming secretary to the Count of Mørkholm. The Count, a conservative type, walked up his estate and stopped all the clocks in the 18th century. He only dies in 1918, when ambitious Carl starts the clocks again. Carl then embraces the future by becoming a dealer in machine-guns and suchlike. Meanwhile, Amalie Teander is growing up in a family that owns a provincial

The History of Danish Dreams
by Peter Hoeg

tr. Barbara Haveland
Harvill, £14.99



Peter Hoeg: not to be underestimated

newspaper. The paper predicts all events in advance and the Teander household is run according to a strict schedule: wedding invitations specify the weather for the day and the birthdates of the couple's future children. However, when the wise old matriarch dies the paper gets its predictions wrong and goes bust. Amalie

escapes a descent into genteel poverty by marrying flash Carl. They have a son called Carsten who becomes Denmark's top lawyer.

Meanwhile again – the continual scene-changing recalls Snoopy's forever unfinished epic "It Was a Dark and Stormy Night", which has a similar pattern – young Anna Bak is being raised as a reincarnation of the Virgin Mary by her father, a bellfire preacher in a hilariously squalid fishing village. Anna, understandably, runs off with Adonis, a stagehand in a touring theatre company. Adonis comes from a long line of petty criminals but has decided to go straight. Hoeg cheekily claims that prominent 20th-century Danes like the architect Møldahl and the business magnate H.N. Andersen were really Adonis's brothers but lied about their origins.

Decent if improvident Adonis marries Anna, and their daughter Maria, a slum runaway, marries high-flying Carsten to produce the narrator, for what that's worth. As with all magical-realist work, anything is possible so nothing is surprising. The Count lives for 200 years. Maria's pregnancy lasts six. Anna's spotless temperament flat hovers at first-floor level while the rest of the building sinks into the mud. Amalie's grandfather, instead of growing wrinkled with age, grows

transparent and, instead of dying, simply disappears. It's one damn miracle after another.

Hoeg's writing is rather better than his material – cool and even, no post-modern punning, the humour mostly quiet and oblique. The characters are more rounded alive than Rushdie's, or Marquez's for that matter. But the book does suffer from first-novel disease in patches. The clearest symptom is the presentation of clichés as if they were fresh, hard-won insights. "History is always an invention, a fairy-tale built upon certain clues," for example. Or, "Children take in more, a great deal more, than we give them credit for."

An odd variation on this is the presentation of universal clichés as if they applied only to Denmark. Hoeg contends that only Danish actresses flirt in the wings and then portray sensitive nobility on stage; that only the Danish bourgeoisie indulges in hypocrisy; that only Danish parents prefer children to be good-looking and successful; and that only in Denmark is the power elite so cosily corrupt.

This may, however, be meant as a running joke, or an allusion to Hamlet's comment, "Denmark is a prison," and Horatio's reply, "Then is the world one." Peter Hoeg is not a writer to be underestimated.

Who's reading whom?

Jilly Cooper found *Miss Smilla's Feeling for Snow* by Peter Hoeg (*Flamingo*) at the top of her pile of holiday reading



Peter Hoeg's whodunnit-with-a-message set in the Arctic Circle is beautifully written and gripping all the way through. But despite being a terrific story – chases, Eskimos, and acres of snow – there are minor flaws. The ending is pretentious beyond belief and our heroine suffers and survives so many injuries that she would be better suited to a Tom and Jerry cartoon. Deep down I can't help feeling that Miss Smilla's sensibilities about snow are really those of a Mr Smilla. Hoeg doesn't get her quite right as a woman. Her reaction to the opposite sex doesn't ring true and he is unable to conjure wafting female emotion. There's something wrong with her clothes too. We're told that she is attractive to men but she spends her whole time putting on vests. The result is a rather solid Eskimo.

1550 Miss Anna

Battlefield in the heart of a reluctant hero

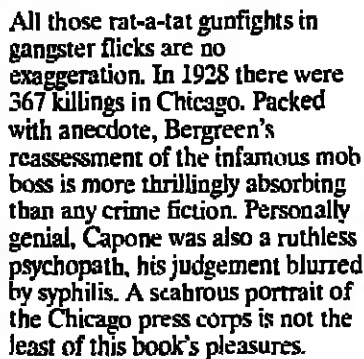
The great Italian writer Antonio Tabucchi has created a character with a life beyond the page. By Harriet Paterson

Tunnel vision: Epileptic, asthmatic and house mother to 18 cats, Cathy is one of “the mole people”, inhabitants of a huge disused underground train tunnel in New York City. Some have shelters made of cinder blocks and plywood, others live precariously on ledges and niches. Some go out to bars, some forage for cans in the early morning, some never leave their hovels. Their tales of blighted lives, debt and drugs are beyond wretchedness, in a realm of existential weirdness oddly like Beckett’s *The Lost Ones*. Margaret Morton’s photographs in *The Tunnel* (Vale £30) are a testament to “unaccommodated man”.

He doesn't have to go far. A political conscience walks into his life in the form of a young activist couple who flush him out of his ideological burrow. Both provoke obscure feelings of tenderness in him — the young man reminds him of himself as a boy, the girl is young and beautiful. Pereira helps them despite himself, for this is more than just an encounter between abstract principles. As Tabucchi once said: "I prefer a

Tabucchi's writing has taken on a new departure. It is less abstract and cerebral, more directly concerned with character than in the past. Surrealism and dreamlike ambiguity have given way to firmer ground — to a thoroughly unified examination of the transformation of a man's heart. Tabucchi has created that rare thing, a literary character so real that he possesses a life independent of the book that temporarily framed him.

Reviewed by Emma Hagestadt and Christopher Hirst



Happy Days by Beryl Cook
(Gollancz, £14.99)
More leopardskin lycra, bouffant hairstyles and bespectacled voyeurs living it up in the nightclubs of Tenerife, the tango bars of Buenos Aires and the public library. The recently OBE'd Cook confirms her strength as a benignly wicked social satirist.

gardening



Seeds of faith

In bleak mid-winter Anna Pavord looks forward to some exotic summer visitors: among them 'Jewel of Africa', 'Hippy Mixed' and 'Zulu Prince'

There is ice on the inside of the study window, and I am looking at a packet of Venidium 'Zulu Prince', in a kind of disbelief that flowers like this could ever exist in the garden. A blue tit is swinging from the blackened six-foot stalk of a sunflower in the border outside. Even the tough old hellebores have crumpled up with cold and here am I planning to grow South African daisies, bred on the veldt, while the thermometer hauls itself up to a grudging 25F.

Venidiums are unusual among annual flowers in having good leaves. Annuals don't usually bother much about their foliage. Most of them are hell-bent on setting seed, which means hanging out a flower seductive enough to tempt a passing insect from the straight and narrow, without resorting to leaves. But these 'monarchs of the veldt', as they are called, have deeply lobed leaves, silvery white and rather woolly in texture.

The flowers are usually a rich saturated orange, but 'Zulu Prince' (Thompson & Morgan, £1.59) has creamy white flowers, the petals arranged - rather like a sunflower's - around a dark central disc. Well grown, they can be up to four inches across on plants about two feet high, doing best in light, sandy soil in a sunny spot.

For summer flowering outside, you need to sow the seeds in March or April, scattering them on the surface of a five-inch pot of compost and covering them very thinly with more compost or vermiculite. I generally wrap pots in clingfilm to keep the compost moist. Germination will take between two and three weeks at a temperature of around 60-65F. Prick the seedlings into individual three-inch pots and grow them until the weather is warm enough for them to be set outside. They will flower until the first frosts.

Venidiums also make good early spring pot plants for a frost-free conservatory. For this, you need to sow in August or September and shift the plants eventually into five- or six-inch pots of compost, where they can stay until they have finished flowering.

The foxgloves I sowed in mid-June came to nothing. A mole homed in on the seedbed and piggy-backed foxgloves, asters, catananche and polemonium so dizzily around the area that they never recovered. So I'll have to start again this year. I fancy 'The Shirley' (Chiltern, 84p), with vast spikes of pink, cream and plum, spotted and blotched

with darker colours and 'Apricot' (Chiltern, 84p) which has slightly smaller spikes of soft, creamy apricot.

Thompson & Morgan is introducing a climbing nasturtium with variegated leaves, the 'Jewel of Africa' (£1.89), which fills an important gap and is on my list this year.

'Alaska' has been the usual choice if you wanted a variegated nasturtium, but that is a bush, not a climber. Jewel of Africa has flowers in mixed colours: orange, red and yellow. Seeds are easy to grow, sown singly in three-inch pots, then wrapped in clingfilm until they germinate. I sowed the dark-leaved 'Empress of India' on 9 May last year and it flowered prodigiously all summer, sharing a hot bit of the bank with the English pot marigold, 'Touch of Red'.

Among their new perennials, Thompson & Morgan is also offering seed of a herbaceous geranium, *G. pratense striatum* (£2.99), which I had from a friend a few years ago. It has the useful ground-covering habit of all this tribe, and the flowers are like willow-pattern china, the white petals streaked and striped with blue. Some of the petals are neatly divided down the middle, white one side, blue the other. I'm going to raise some more plants to set in long grass. Cranesbills, the plain blue kind, grow quite vigorously along roadside verges, though they seem to do better on the high chalklands than they do in our clay-lined lanes. In the garden they haul themselves up through the lower branches of the musk rose 'Felicia', which has pale trusses of pinkish-apricot flowers.

Suttons is introducing a new tobacco flower called 'Hippy Mixed' (£1.99), which is neither scentless nor dwarf - two steps in the right direction. The flowers are a mixture of crimson, rose, purple and white and the plants go up to about two feet. I sowed tobacco flowers on the 26 March last year and had four traysful of plants to put out among the artemisias in the front borders. As with venidiums, you should sow as thinly as possible in a pot, but do not cover the seeds with compost. They need light for germination, which should happen within two weeks. Wrap the pot in clingfilm after you have watered it and allowed it to drain. Keep it at a temperature of around 65F until the seeds have sprouted.

Chiltern has the species *Nicotiana affinis* (89p), which may have contributed its two-penn'orth to the 'Hippy Mixed' strain of tobacco plants, for it

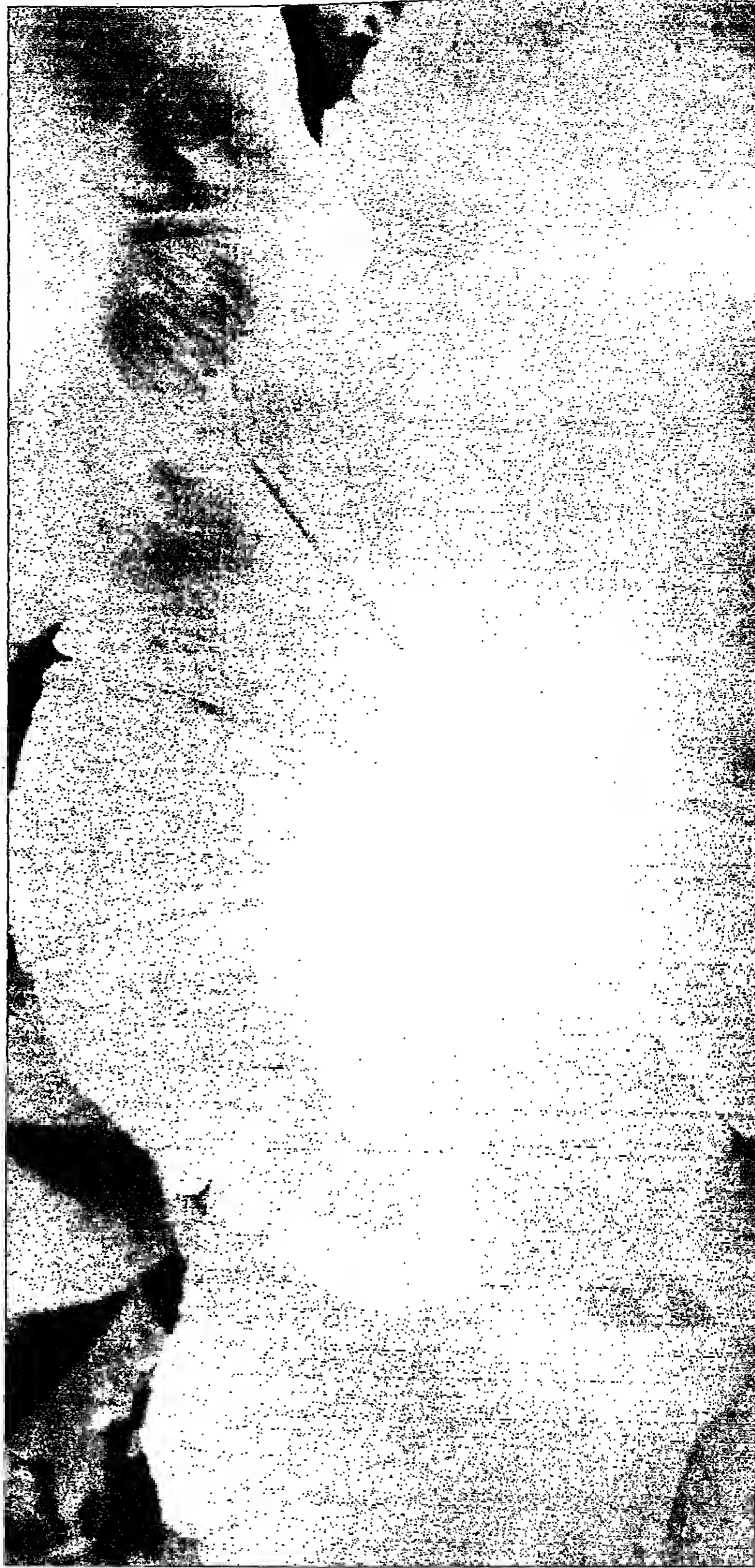
is tall and beautifully scented. It grows to about three feet and has star-shaped white flowers which continue until the first frosts. These were once popular conservatory plants, potted up into individual pots. Treated this way and kept frost-free, they revert to being perennials as they are in their native Brazil.

Morning glory can also be used to decorate greenhouses and conservatories, though it does equally well on a sunny wall outside, where it will climb eight to 10 feet. The most important thing, if you are growing it outside, is not to be in too much of a hurry. The seedlings sulk spectacularly if you put them out too early, when the nights are still chilly, and then get so stuck in sulking mode they never recover. You will know if this has happened because all colour drains out of the leaves.

Suttons has the morning glory *Ipomoea rubro-coerulea*, 'Heavenly Blue' (95p), which you could sow in April, setting each seed in a separate three-inch pot wrapped in clingfilm. Soak the seed overnight first to soften the hard seed coat. Germination will take anything from 10-15 days, but the temperature needs to be high, around 70F. Grow the plants with plenty of light but not too much heat, transplanting them if necessary into bigger pots before hardening them off gradually. During this period, they may need staking. If you want to grow them in a conservatory, the plants should be potted again into eight-inch pots.

Convolvulus tricolor has funnel-shaped flowers which, like morning glory's, fade by the afternoon, but are much smaller. They are born in the leaf axils of bushy plants, about 12-15in high. 'Flagship Mixed' (Mr Fothergill's, £1.35) has trumpet flowers of red, white, blue and pink, all with a white eye. Sow in late March and prick out the seedlings into boxes of compost. Harden the plants off gradually in a cold frame before planting them out in May. They can be massed together in containers, or grown as an edging to a sunny path.

Chiltern Seeds, Bortree Stile, Ulverston, Cumbria LA12 7PB (01229 581137)
Mr Fothergill's, Gazeley Rd, Kentford, Newmarket, Suffolk CB8 7QB (01638 751161)
Sutton Seeds, Hela Rd, Torquay, Devon TQ2 7QJ (01803 614455)
Thompson & Morgan, Poplar Lane, Ipswich, Suffolk IP3 3BU (01473 688821)



Flowers hell-bent on setting seed: *Ipomoea* 'Heavenly Blue' morning glory (main photo). Top (left to right): *Geranium pratense* and nasturtium *tropaeolum*, which is best sown singly, in three-inch pots

Photographs: Garden Picture Library

Onion fanciers celebrate the New Year by sowing seed of their favourites. By the end of the summer these may have swelled to sufficiently nummish proportions to beat the world record for onions (a mighty 11.5lb). Serious growers use deep seed trays, measuring about 15in x 9in x 4in and a loam-based seed compost such as John Innes No 1. Fill the tray with the compost and firm it down gently. Scatter the seed over the surface and cover it thinly with more compost. Water the tray and keep moist until the seeds have germinated, which they should do



CUTTINGS

after two weeks. They do not need much heat. Aim for 55F - anything much higher will inhibit germination.

While the seedlings still look like little croquet hoops, no more than 0.5in above the compost, prick them out into trays of John Innes No 2 compost, setting them 2in apart. Correct

watering is vital. The seedlings should not be swamped, nor should they dry out.

By mid-April, the seedlings should be strong enough to be hardened off in a cold frame so that they can be planted out by early May. Serious growers save their own strains of seed, but Robinson's Improved Mammoth Onion gives suitably outrageous results. 100 seeds cost £2.30 from W Robinson & Sons Ltd, Sunny Bank, Forton, nr Preston, Lancs PR3 0BN (01524 791210).

The Garden History Society has arranged a series of six

lectures starting on 7 February when Lord Rothschild introduces a talk by his daughter Beth Tomassini on the important Victorian gardens at Waddesdon, Buckinghamshire. On 14 February, owner Patrice Fustier talks about Courson in the Ile de France, where the English gardens were designed by the Empress Josephine's landscape architect. On 21 February the focus moves to Scotland when Lord Dalkeith introduces a lecture by Fiona Jamieson on Drumlanrig, while on the 28 February, Edward Gatacre talks about De Wiersse, his garden

in the Netherlands, made in the English style. The March lectures cover La Mortola, the famous garden on the Italian Riviera made by the Hanbury family in the early years of the century, and the sub-tropical Tresco. Tickets (from Lynn Curtis, 43 Bourne St, London SW1W 8JA) cost £6 each, or you can book for the whole series (£30). Lectures start at 6pm on Wednesday evenings at the Scientific Societies Lecture Theatre, New Burlington Place, London W1.

Dose pruning has been revolutionised since trials at the Royal National Rose Society revealed that what hybrid tea roses respond to best is a quick haircut with a hedgecutter. Now there has been a similar upheaval in ideas about pruning fruit such as apples and pears. If you grow these as cordons, fans or espaliers, you will still have to prune them in summer to keep them in the shape you want, but standards and half standards growing in lawns can be left completely alone. Professional growers have found that tying down the branches so that they bend down in horizontal arches has a greater effect on fruiting than any pruning technique. Peg down the branches of young trees to start them off with the right habits.

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Burning trees is good for you

At least that's the theory according to farmers who are adapting the ancient art of coppicing to combat global warming. By Daniel Butler

"In growing trees to burn because it's good for the countryside." The Avon farmer Brian Maggs is proud of his apparently iconoclastic approach to the environment. "There are thousands of acres across Britain doing nothing as set-aside. It would be far better to use them to grow an energy crop to reduce our use of fossil fuels."

He is convinced growing and burning wood to generate electricity is the environmentally friendly answer and has put his beliefs into practice by planting 10 hectares (24 acres) of poplar cuttings on his farm near Bath. He says wood for fuel is "green" in every way.

Maggs's conviction that burning trees is an answer to global warming comes as a surprise to most people. After all, isn't the destruction of the rainforests one of today's worst environmental disasters and surely, burning creates carbon dioxide, the cause of rising world temperatures?

Not a bit of it, according to Maggs: "For three years my trees take carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. They provide shelter for wildlife and employment for men who would otherwise be laid off. Then they are burnt to produce electricity, putting no more gas back into the atmosphere than they absorbed as they grew. The stumps regenerate and three years later they're ready for another harvest."

The key to this approach lies in the centuries-old art of coppicing which makes use of the natural ability of many trees to survive being cut down, with new withes rocketing up from an established root network – far faster than a new seedling fighting to grow both underground and above the surface. Now coppicing looks set to undergo a revival as government researchers investigate using wood to generate electricity on an industrial scale.

In theory this makes good economic and environmental sense because a tree's growth is greatest during its early years and young trees are a particularly rich source of food and shelter for wildlife. "We counted 33 species of bird in our two-year-old wood, which is more than last year," says Maggs. "But that's probably the peak; we think they drop off again in the third year." This is fortunate, as it coincides with the three-yearly harvest.

In case the concept of growing fuel to compete with oil sounds implausible, it is worth remembering that until the 18th century, Britain was fuelled by wood and charcoal. Even today, some countries still take the principle very seriously. The Swedes, for example, have 9,000 hectares of deciduous coppice and even the US is not immune. "Most people are shocked to learn Oregon gets 40 per cent of its electricity from wood," says Peter Billings of British Biogen, the trade association for wood-burning interests. "Getting the farmers to coppice is the whole reason for British Biogen," he explains. "We have to bridge the gap between an energy industry used to planning 15-20 years ahead and farmers who are more



Brian Maggs with two-year-old poplars in his coppice wood near Bristol

Photograph: Christopher Jones

concerned about the next six months."

The Government is helping by funding half-a-dozen trial projects around the country to establish the costs and project yields. Alec Barnes, a Devon farmer, is conducting one of these near Tiverton. He says he could only afford to invest in the scheme with the help of grants.

So far, the researchers – based at the Energy Technology Support Unit (ETSU) and ADAS (formerly the Agricultural Development Advisory Service) – are two years into their studies. Although the initial results are encouraging, the scientists admit there is much to learn. "We still don't know enough about the crop," says Gareth Ellis, woodland consultant for ADAS. "We only harvested our first trial sites at the end of November. We have to experiment with the machinery and there are lots of questions to answer – whether to leave the poles whole or chip them like silage, and which machine is least harmful to the stumps left behind? Then, because it typically

contains about 50 per cent water which reduces its burning efficiency, we've got to work out how to dry it down to 30 per cent."

The results are sufficiently encouraging, however, for the energy industry to be interested. Three wood-fuelled power stations are in the pipeline – to be built near Eye in Suffolk, Swindon in Wiltshire and Selby in Yorkshire. The last of these is being developed by Yorkshire Environmental, a subsidiary of Yorkshire Water. "We're applying for planning permission to build a plant," says Keith Pitcher, development manager. "Eventually we should be able to heat 16,000 homes."

The plant, which should come on line in late 1997, uses the latest gasification technology to convert wood chips into gasses by intense heat and pressure. The result is surprisingly efficient, converting 30-45 per cent of the available energy into electricity, compared with 20-25 per cent in a conventional coal plant. Many remain

sceptical: "The technology is unproven," admits Ellis. "Critics say it's one step too far – an untried crop being used in untried technology."

Keith Pitcher dismisses this with a shrug: "We know from experience with wind power that prices will come down as the technology is more fully understood," he says. "We'll get an industry emerging from this and as the yields from the trees improve, returns will be better for everyone."

For all his enthusiasm, however, Pitcher has to concede he cannot compete with gas on price. The Renewable Energy Bureau estimates wood-powered electricity costs an average of 8.7p per kW, compared with 5.3p for wind power. In contrast, gas costs about 2p and coal around 3p. Underwriting Yorkshire's investment is the Non-Fossil Fuel Obligation (NFFO), a commitment placed on electricity companies to buy a percentage of their power from sustainable sources. Under NFFOs (three have been negotiated so far and a fourth is in progress),

investors in new technology are guaranteed high prices for 15 years. This in turn means Pitcher can provide a long-term market to local farmers, allowing them to establish coppices while he waits for his plant to be built: "One of the reasons we are going ahead is to break the vicious cycle of no market until there's a product and no product until there's a market," he says.

Although he refuses to give details, Yorkshire is believed to be offering about £20 a ton. With the research showing possible annual yields of up to 45 tons per hectare, this could be enough. "At £20 a ton, farmers should be able to get about the same profit as they do on winter wheat," says Gareth Ellis.

In Devon, Alec Barnes is unconvinced: "It's not worth going into unless you can get £25 a ton," he says. As a result he is looking with interest at a neighbour who is experimenting with making composite boards from coppiced wood. "As with any business, the only way you can keep prices up is

to have various outlets. If you're dependent on one customer, you're at his mercy," he explains.

In the end, however, the real driving force behind wood power may lie not with relatively big plants, but on a smaller scale: "The advantage of wood energy is it is very flexible," says Dr Keith Richards, ETSU's deputy manager for Biomass Resources and Statistics. "We have several housing and industrial estates which are interested in small plants. The great thing about wood is once you have located your user, you can design the plant around them."

"Wood is only expensive if you are talking about selling the power wholesale, but if you are producing the energy on a small-scale rural site it is very competitive," agrees Peter Billings. In the end this is the attraction for Brian Maggs and Alec Barnes, who both intend to use their coppices to beat their homes and businesses. "We should make money by saving money," says Barnes.

Splattered with mud, blinded by fog, a walk through nothingness, but a fine way to start the year...

Word had gone round the village that the New Year Walk would assemble outside the shop at 10.30 on Monday morning. At 10.29 there was no one in sight, but in the next two minutes 15 busman starters and one dog materialised.

Our leader was Ron Robins – a tall, lean, fit-looking 59-year-old, who, with his wife, Margaret, owns the shop and runs the post office. Like most of the others present, I was unashamedly aware that in 1992 these two walked by a roundabout route from John O'Groats to Land's End, covering 1,400 miles in 100 days. So did Max, their black mongrel, like a sawn-off Labrador, whose ebullience on New Year's Day was such as to suggest that he was hoping for a repeat performance.

After a quick head count, Ron announced that because fog was lying on the hills, we would head down the valley first and come back over the top, in the hope that by then the mist might have lifted. His aim was a two-and-a-half-hour walk, ending at the Old Crown on the green.

Away we went, out of the village on to footpaths and down across the fields. Our little column proved agreeably flexible: we tended to bunch at stiles, then spread out again. The result was that I kept falling in with new companions, some of whom I knew, some strangers.

At first there was much talk of the weather. "We'd never have done this on Saturday," said somebody – nor would we, for Saturday was the vilest and most dangerous day that anyone could remember. Freezing rain, hitting frozen ground, turned every



DUFF HART-DAVIS

smooth surface to glass and made it impossible to stand up on the slightest slope. Now, as we trudged, the bone was still in the ground but at least the top had thawed to greasy mud.

At any point where there was a possibility of error, Ron waited genially to shepherd his flock, and Margaret banded out reviving peppermints. On the move, they talked of their big hike. They walked the length of Britain not to raise funds, but merely for a holiday. Yet as they headed south, people began to offer them money, and when they returned to base in Gloucestershire, Max proved such a charmer that fans sponsored him to the tune of £2,500, enough to provide a trained guide dog for the blind. The couple also raised £600 for the village church.

As we went round the back of the eminence known as Smallpox Hill, Ray, who had lived in the village all his life, admitted that he had never been able to find any trace of the isolation hospital that once stood on its

summit. All the same, he reckoned that the hill was a spooky old place, especially when shrouded in mist.

When we passed Coldharbour Farm – what a name, on that morning – the talk turned to hornets, which nest in a long wooded gully known as The Delkin, and we wondered if the poor creatures could have survived the recent bitter cold. Speaking of natural history, one woman disclosed that she has inherited a collection of birds' eggs, some with labels in Arabic, and finds herself in some difficulty, since possession of such things is now illegal.

As we ground up to the 700ft ridge of Cam Long Down, Ron, ever the optimist, predicted that we might come out into the sun on top. Far from it: the air was colder, the fog thicker, the view – normally spectacular – zero.

A steep grass descent caused some spectacular falls, and left Elliott, one of the teenagers, plastered in mud all up the back of his red lumberjack shirt. Then came a hard pull up to Uley Bury, an extensive Iron Age fort crowning the next-door hill; half a lap of the Roman race-track that skirts its perimeter, and over one of the precipitous earth ramparts, down which I like to imagine the defenders rolling rocks on wild, red-headed invaders from Wales.

And so at 2pm we piled into the cheerful fag of the Old Crown for a few pints of Uley bitter. We had achieved (and seen) practically nothing, but we had given ourselves a good workout and made new friends, and everyone felt that we had started 1996 in the best possible fashion.

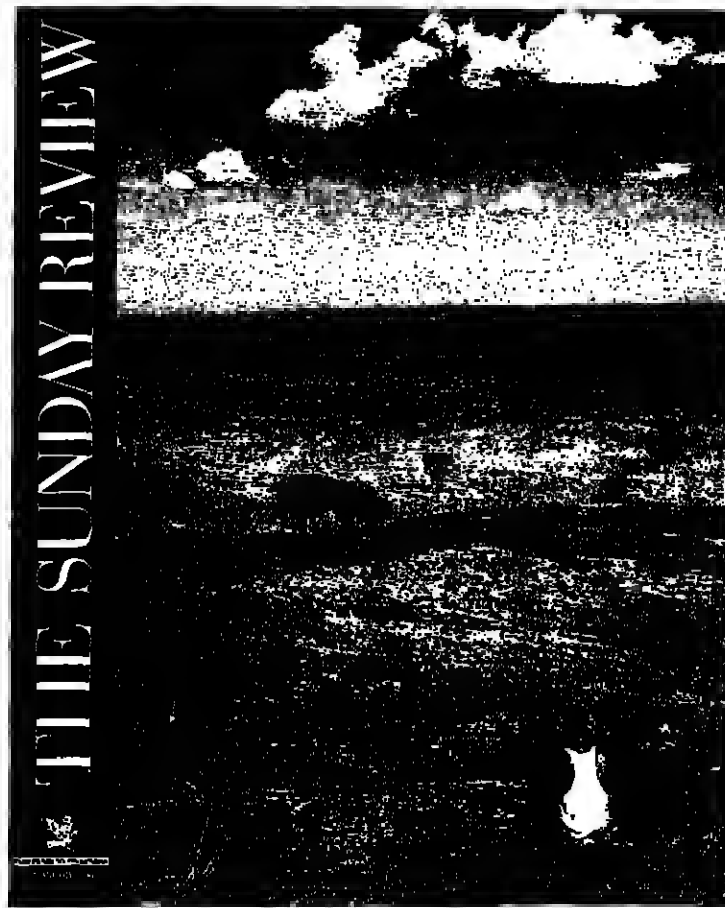
A little local trouble

A weekly round-up of rural rows

Do we really want ever-closer ties with the other members of the European Union? Not in Scalfy and Newby, near Scarborough – at least not if the Royal Mail has its say. The problem began after the villages gave a traditional red phone box to their twin town, Porcie, in France. Gratefully received, the kiosk now houses a payphone. When the French reciprocated with a classic yellow letterbox, however, British post-office officials said "Non" to the idea of using it.

"We have recently invested, and continue to invest, a great deal of resources in upgrading all posting facilities to represent a national identity which reflects our national heritage," a Royal Mail spokesperson said this week. "Foreign post boxes for public use would dilute this effect." There would be no objection, she added, to erecting the box if sealed. *Vive l'entente cordiale!*

Elsewhere in Yorkshire: Townies Llanocent Of Destroying Rural Life Shock. The picturesque village of Egton on the North York Moors had supposedly been facing a familiar problem: rich outsiders buying weekend homes, pushing up prices and forcing the natives out. So the parish council set up a scheme to build five low-cost houses for locals. The trouble is no one wants them. "People kept telling us they wanted these houses," the council's chairman, Tom Hutton, told the *Yorkshire Post*. "But where are these people now?" Unless five genuine Egtonite buyers are found soon, the £300,000 project will be scrapped.

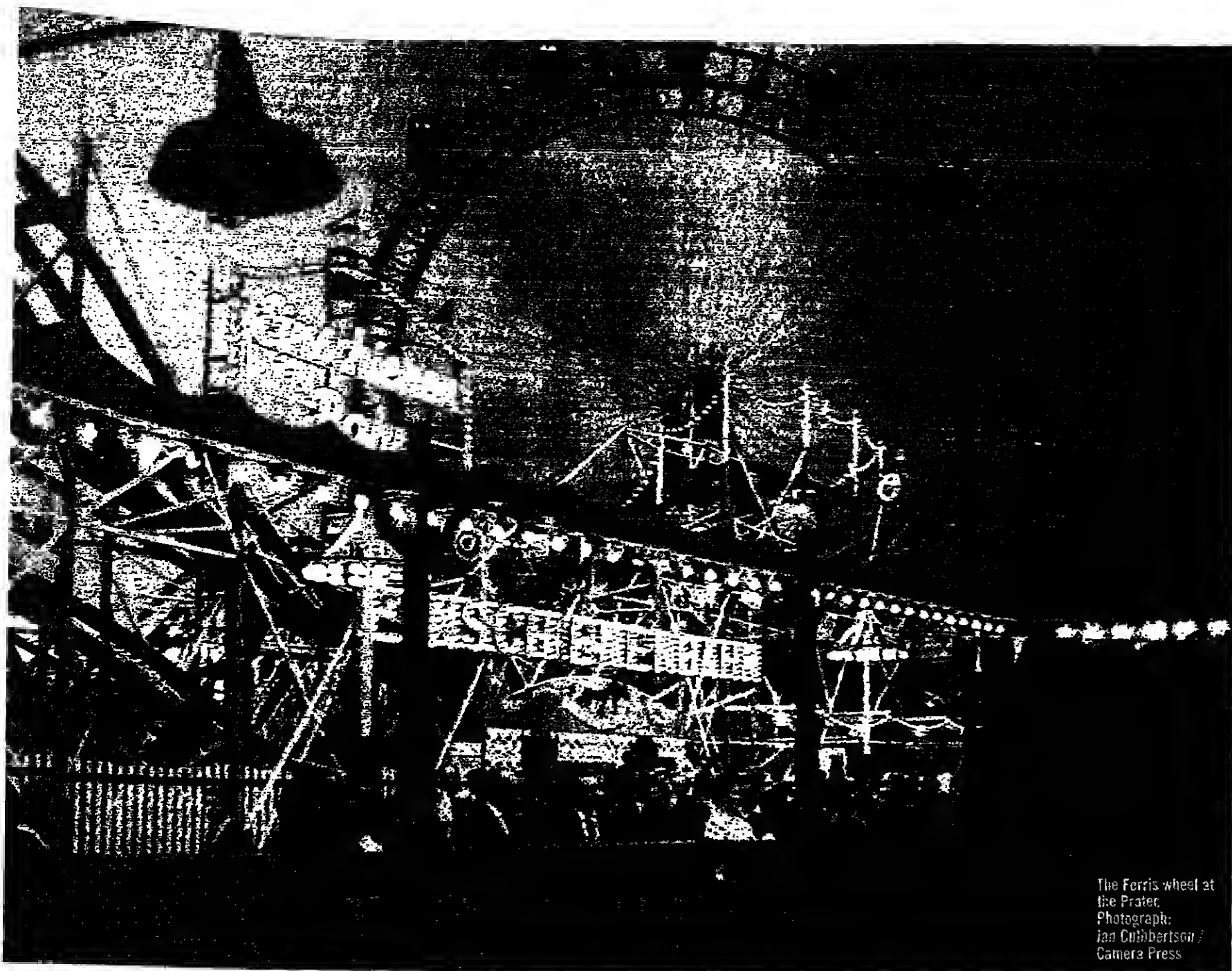


Wonderful world: Blake Morrison, Helen Fielding, Jill Crawshaw and their fellow travellers combine to offer a 32-page month-by-month guide to the globe's most desirable holiday hotspots

Statesman, fiddler and buffoon: John Carlin anatomises Newt Gingrich

Plus: the first Sunday Review/ Panasonic writing competition

IN TOMORROW'S INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY



The Ferris wheel at the Prater. Photograph: Jan Culbertson / Camera Press

A city that comes out in the cold

Simply everyone turned out for the opening night of the new Terence Conran-designed hotel, Das Triest, in Vienna. Reggie Nadelson checked in for a long weekend and, somewhat reluctantly, checked out the city

Friday: *le tout* Vienna is at the opening night party of Das Triest, Vienna's newest hotel. Austrians in natty suede waistcoats; girls and boys in the slightly five-minutes-ago high style of a provincial European city; wannabe spies in fedoras and pony-tails; Euro-women in Hermes scarves straight out of the orange box, starched, gleaming, silk; members of the international brotherhood of black clothing who might be poets. Or not. And here, on the elegant ground floor of the hotel, there is much merriment, much kissing of cheeks and air, maybe even of hands. I can't quite push this conceit to the clicking of heels, though – to Christopher Plummer as Baron Von Trapp – as everyone dashes for the Prater that flows like champagne.

The party takes place on all six floors of the hotel; the guests are in constant motion, inspecting rooms and suites, tasting sushi in the restaurant and carrot canapés in the smart little gym where Euro-yuppies sample the machinery and perhaps recall that Arnie Schwarzenegger was born an Austrian. As I am swept up in welcome by Margit Frank, the hotel's owner, I assume that, this being my first trip to Vienna, everyone kisses ladies' hands. Or cuddles little lap dogs. Or resembles a character out of *The Third Man*. I can't help it. I think Vienna, I think architecture and music; whipped cream; Nazis. I think Vienna, I think decadence, irony, complaisance, waltzes and schitzel and Freud; and Orson Welles on the big wheel in the Prater.

Das Triest is a six-story building about 10 minutes from St Stephen's Cathedral in the dead centre of the city. The hotel has been stunningly renovated. On this site, they tell me, there has been a hotel for as many as 300 years. From the penthouse terrace you can see Vienna frosted with snow, as if it were the work of some crazed confectioner on an acid bender. Winter is certainly Vienna's real season; soon the balls will begin and people carrying shoe bags will head out across town to do some serious waltzing. Flares blaze on the terrace up here, party-goers brave the cold for oysters and Krug. But wait, what's that? Why is Sir Terence Conran over there trying to wipe some imaginary dust off a wall?

"He'd actually like to rearrange several items, if you let him," says Vicki Davis, Conran's friend. Sir Terence, as they respectfully address him in Vienna (this is a town built for etiquette) – Sir Terence and his firm have designed Das Triest for Margit Frank. And Frank is beaming. Charming, elegant, impeccably dressed, she is a little flushed, a little

astonished that, after years of renovation and fending off stodgy neighbours who didn't want a modern hotel in their backyard, it has all come to pass. And it is spectacular. Das Triest is a designer hotel the way it should be in a city that a hundred years ago was the birthplace of some of the greatest of modern architecture.

Most designer hotels, tend to dark corridors, sharp edges and stainless steel sinks that resemble urinals. Not Das Triest. My room is on the sixth floor and has a large terrace. It has pristine yellow curtains, a blue carpet, a deep red armchair. It has shining wood cupboards and a desk large enough to work on. It has a bed as big as Austria with exquisite white linens by Frette. And the bathroom!

This is a bathroom with roots in the great Art Deco bathrooms of hotels like Claridges. All those white tiles, all those thick towels – and the huge bath and the lighted mirrors and glistening chrome fixtures. I could have spent the whole weekend right there.

Having checked out my delicious room, I return to the party. Down in the basement is a wine cellar where the suede waistcoats have settled in for a long night of white wine and salami. We head for the bar, all blue light and stainless steel and black-and-white photographs. But a bar, like steak, needs a little age.

Later that night, as the party at Das Triest winds down, everyone heads out to the American Bar in the centre of town. An extraordinary green marble cube with wood panels, it was designed by Adolf Loos, one of the most provocative of Vienna's turn-of-the-century moderns. A renegade architect of the Vienna Secession, Loos broke away from his already avant-garde cohorts to make even purer buildings, among them the Looshaus – "A building without eyebrows", it was called. "That's not a house he has built for us," someone said, "but a thought."

Still, Loos managed the American Bar, which is not a thought but a bar. The quintessential bar. A pair of couples linger passionately on the leather banquettes. A hip young bartender with red hair and a New Orleans accent mixes righteous cocktails and, on the sound system, he plays the great Getz-Gilberto album. In the American Bar we drink Martinis, while outside snow falls on a silent Vienna.

Saturday: the Prater. Vienna's Hyde Park, Central Park, Bois de Boulogne. This has been the city's green space, its amusement park, since the middle of the 18th century. But for me, at least, it is the site of the most evocative scene in movies. This is where Orson Welles as Harry Lime con-

fronts his old pal Holly Martins (Joseph Cotten) in *The Third Man*.

The huge wheel, with its wooden cages, opened in 1897. When I get there I almost expect to see Welles on the thing, but there is barely a sign, only a single faded photograph from the film.

Two hundred metres up, in the wooden box that swings precariously, you can see most of this city that started as a small Roman encampment in 500 BC. Flashing forward about 1500 years, in 1030 Vienna, as it was then called, was the second biggest town north of the Alps, after Cologne. After that it was taken and retaken, built and rebuilt, walled and re-walled until, in 1246, Frederick the Warlike was killed and Vienna became the seat of the Holy Roman Empire. Enter the Habsburgs.

The Reformation had its day, Jews and Turks came and went, leaving influence in the shape of all those onions and pumpkins on churches. By the mid-17th century, though, the Counter Reformation took hold for good and Austria became a stayed resolutely Catholic. Italian architects were imported to turn religion into stone. Baroque churches and monasteries went up and defined the Viennese style.

From up here, from this creaking monster of a ferris wheel, you imagine you can see it all – the Danube (a bit disappointing, this stream of a river, and not blue at all), the Vienna Woods (dotted with bideous suburbs), the overwhelming imperial palace of the Habsburgs.

So much history. So much building. So much stuff crammed into this place that before 1918, when Austria was demoted to a tiny republic, Vienna was the capital of a vast chunk of Europe. In the late 17th century it was the centre of music and theatre; by the middle of the 18th, the Empress Maria Theresa had married off her daughters to just about everyone in Europe. One of her girls, Marie Antoinette, married Louis XVI of France.

Look over there – the Hofburg, the imperial palaces. In it, the dozens of courtyards and apartments, the overwhelming collections of silver and china and armour and furniture. Everywhere are museums and ornate town-houses. Further afield is the Schönbrunn, the summer palace where Mozart played for little Marie Antoinette.

The guide books tell you that, under Prince Metternich, during the first half of the 19th century, pretty much everyone in Vienna started living a cosy bourgeois life, all Biedermeier furniture and waltz nights. Then came the revolutions of 1848, then the endless reign of Franz Joseph who held sway over the Austro-Hungarian Empire

until 1916, almost exactly the same number of years as Queen Victoria ruled in England.

Down there is the Ring, the famous central boulevard of Vienna, with its municipal buildings and hotels and statuary, carved out in the 19th century when Baron Haussmann was turning Paris into a similar city of great boulevards. The Industrial Revolution took hold and the railroads were built and the Metro; there were steamships on the Danube. By 1910, Vienna had two million inhabitants. Most of them, it seems to me, attending musical events.

Seeing the huge state opera house and the concert halls, I think of all the great composers who lived here; Mozart, who wrote his best operas in Vienna; Beethoven's symphonies; Schubert his lieder. And there were Brahms and Mahler and all those Strausses. Later, as I wander around reading concert posters (not to mention ads for waltz schools), I find it almost oppressive, this requirement that you respect Vienna's musical history and engage with it; music is a kind of religion in Vienna. I begin, God help me, to long for a quick dose of rap. OK, Barry Manilow.

The music has stayed on. But by the end of the Second World War Austria had become a little nation of six million where once Vienna had ruled 52 million. It is a small neutral country that depends on tourism, and Vienna is now the kind of city where people have wars about the origin of cake.

For me, on this first visit, Vienna is not a city that seduces; it makes you think, though. But, then you remember what the cynical Harry Lime remarks to the earnest Holly Martins as they disembark from the big wheel: Italy had 30 years of blood, terror and warfare, and it produced the Michelangelo, Leonardo and the Renaissance. Switzerland had 500 years of peace and brotherly love and what did it produce? The cuckoo clock.

Sunday: it's snowing. Everyone carries little shoe bags so they can change into dry shoes inside. Except the beggars, of course; there are plenty of beggars huddled against the walls, often in the doorways of exquisite, gilded cafés that are selling cakes covered in pale green marzipan.

Vienna has had a café society for hundreds of years and everywhere you see people sipping coffee, eating pastry, counting the pieces of bread they've had with lunch in order to report to the waiter how many pieces of bread must be paid for.

At Demel, the most beautiful of the tea rooms, waitresses in black and white serve you with some formality. I watch a perfect Vien-

nese couple consume salmon en croute with mayonnaise for lunch. She is in mink and cashmere. He is in loden with a brush in his hat.

Demel supplied confectionery to the court for hundreds of years; it asserts only it has the right to sell the original Sachertorte (the *echte* Viennese chocolate cake with jam in the middle) because the chef who invented it left the Hotel Sacher to work for Demel. Sacher, of course, disagrees strenuously. Vienna feels like a city that believes its own myths – the men in hat-brushes, the cakes, the music, even the food. It's a meaty cuisine – one restaurant brags that its "schnitzel hangs over the plate".

Everywhere I feel there is an overweening congeniality, an eagerness to please, a fatalism that tattles behind your back. Or maybe it's the contradictions that are interesting, that this heavy bourgeois culture gave rise, for example, to psychoanalysis. You can see Freud's flat at 19 Berggasse; most of the furniture is in London, though – even the couch.

More astonishing is that this town loaded down with so much of the Baroque and Rococo suddenly gave birth to its turn-of-the-century modern art: painters such as Gustav Klimt and Oskar Kokoschka and Egon Schiele; architects like Adolf Loos, Josef Hoffmann. Otto Wagner, who was perhaps the guiding light of the Secession Movement, built wonderful townhouses and Metro stations that catch your eye with their sleek but lush lines.

At the intersection of the Friedrichstrasse is the Secession Pavilion, built in 1898. The white cube topped by a gilded dome made of laurel leaves was put up to promote the Jugendstil (Art Nouveau) style. Inside is an amazing frieze by Gustav Klimt. The bourgeois hated the building; they called it "The Golden Cabbage".

Not so long ago Vienna was a major spy-port, the farthest Western city east, a place on the edge of the world, as a taxi driver reminds me. He's a motormouth kid who drives recklessly on the icy roads. He can get me anything, he boasts: cheap cigarettes, booze, drugs.

"Sure," he says, "I can get anything for you, even nukes, you want Russian nukes? How about body parts?" Yes, he says, he can get body parts, a liver goes for eighty grand. He rambles on; the taxi skids. At midnight, the snow coming down hard, I am glad when Das Triest suddenly appears, windows lighted, at the end of the street.

Das Triest is at 1040 Wiedner Hauptstrasse 12, Vienna (00 43 1 589 18 0). A double room is 2,600 schillings (about £172) per night including breakfast.

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Where Darwin evolved the big theory

Julia Kaminski goes to the Galapagos



Above: basking in the sun, sea lions snooze on the rocks or the sand. You smell and hear them a long time before you see them. Photograph: Mike Gore
Right: the greatest threat to iguanas is not, surprisingly, from tourism, but from dogs introduced by settlers. Photograph: Celia May



When to go

From the end of December to the end of March is warm and calm. July to December is mistier and drizzly; September is particularly crab, and is best avoided.

How to get there

Get to Quito, the capital of Ecuador, South American Experience (0171-976 5511) has a fare of £447 on Viasa from Heathrow via Caracas. From here, two airlines (TAME and SAN) fly to Baltra and San Cristobal respectively for £200-£250 return. The Ecuadorian Air Force operates Hercules freighters to the islands.

What to sign up for

You can select an eight-day boat trip or stitch together two four-day ones. Total cost can be anything from £600 to £1,800. A hotel/cruise combination costs as little as £450.

The sun rises at 6am in the Galapagos Islands – a little late by British summer standards – but at least you can be sure it will rise in a blaze of glorious yellow. Pelicans will be sitting patiently on the dinghy bobbing behind your boat, waiting for morsels of fish to be tossed out as the captain guts the early morning catch in preparation for lunch. This is the way to see the Galapagos – on a small boat, sailing between the islands. You wake up to a new vista each day, and fall asleep under a sky thick with stars, with sea lions grunting on the rocks outside your porthole. If you love wild places, and especially if you love wildlife, you will see why the first explorers to land here called this place las islas encantadas – the enchanted islands. Windswept cliffs are home

to 58 species of birds, 28 of them found only in the archipelago. On one cliff-top on Española island we watched giant albatrosses stepping off into the air currents and floating down above the waves. To get there we had climbed up through brushy scales trees and scrambled past a colony of about 400 blue-footed boobies, all nursing offspring or squawking on eggs. Otherwise pale and unassuming, these birds have the most extraordinary webbed feet of the bird world. A male will stand very solemnly, lifting one leg at a time. Judging by the number of offspring here, the technique is pretty successful. Each pair raises two chicks a year, and our trip in late May was a perfect time to see young ranging from one-day old to two months. The parents take

turns to sit on the hatching eggs in regular, 12-hour shifts. More entrancing, though, are the sea lions, which you smell and hear long before you see them. Basking in the sun, they snooze in vast numbers on the sand or rocks, curled up together with their heads on each others' flanks. Young pups waddle up for a closer look at you and to nibble your toes, shying away only when the 500lb dominant male comes roaring out of nowhere to bring them back to the fold. One of the greatest delights here is swimming with the pups, although the first time a sea lion darts up to peer at you through your snorkelling mask is disconcerting. The snorkelling here is fantastic even without the joy of the sea lions, there are angel fish, parrot fish, Moorish idols, "chocolate-chip starfish", sharks

(small ones), leather-backed turtles, rays of every hue – golden, black and white-spotted – and the giant manta, which can grow to a fin-span of 18ft. Our enthusiasm was matched only by that of our guide, Luis, who remained unwearied by months of seeing familiar creatures. "Look, look, an iguana," he would cry, prompting us all to dash over the rocks brandishing our cameras like paparazzi descending on Liz Hurley. I wondered how I would manage, seven days a week, keeping excitement in my voice as I shouted "Look, look, a dog!" During a week here you can visit roughly seven islands, although if you can manage a fortnight you will get to visit some of the more outlying islands where whales are more likely to be found. Sailing never takes up

more than a couple of hours a day, but, in any case, the voyages are a good time to sunbathe and scan the horizon for dolphins. Our vigilance paid off one day when we were joined by a school of dolphins, diving across our bows and each other. During your trip you also visit the Charles Darwin research station, which is responsible for the protection of the islands and their wildlife. It also advises the Ecuadorian government on environmental matters, rears endangered giant tortoises (Steven Spielberg must have come here for inspiration for ET) and provides a home for Lonesome George, the last remaining Pinta tortoise. Visitors, they say (contrary to expectations), are not the greatest threat to the islands. "Tourism is almost more the

solution to the islands' problems, since it provides economic activity for local people," says Julian Fitter of the Galapagos Conservation Trust, a charity based in Shaftesbury, Dorset, which raises funds for the Charles Darwin Foundation. Numbers so far have been carefully controlled, which means the animals and birds can remain unafraid, and it also means you over feel that the islands are swamped with people. In fact, you hardly see another soul. Of the 61 islands in the archipelago, only five are inhabited. According to Mr Fitter, the main problem is introduced species. Settlers brought with them goats and dogs and pigs, against which endemic plants and animals have no defences. Goats have deforested large areas, wild pigs eat bird and tur-

tle eggs, dogs kill land iguanas and turtles. One of the research station's biggest tasks is to control the numbers of introduced species, and in some cases, such as the goat population on Santa Cruz, to eliminate them altogether. "There is no point worrying about the effects of tourism if the introduced species are not controlled, because in 50 years' time they will have taken over – there will be nothing left," Mr Fitter says. In the meantime, it seems that tourists are welcome. Luis Maldonado of the Association of Galapagos Tour Operators says: "The present capacity for tourists is almost double the actual flow, and if tourism is handled well, as it has been for the past 25 years, it allows sensible use of resources and brings increased awareness of the islands."

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An on-the-spot survey of mountain restaurants recently found that lunch in a Swiss resort could cost twice as much as lunch in an Italian one

I doubt that many skiers need me to repeat the message that Italy is the only place in the Alps where prices have not risen uncomfortably in recent years. But what may be worth emphasising – at least for the benefit of those who have yet to commit themselves to a ski holiday – is the size of the gulf that has opened up between Italy and the rest.

Snow's Up

by Chris Gill

In mid-December, an on-the-spot survey of mountain restaurant prices commissioned by *Where to Ski* found that lunch in a major Swiss resort could cost almost twice as much as in a major Italian one, with France coming a close second and even Austria working out closer to Switzerland than to Italy. The survey showed that a satisfying mountain lunch of pasta with wine or beer followed by a fruit tart typically cost £14.50 in a Swiss resort such as Verbier, £12.50 in a French resort such as Tignes, £11.50 in an Austrian resort such as St Anton, but only £7.50 in an Italian resort such as Courmayeur or Selva. The detailed findings of the survey contain some messages of interest even to those with their holiday bookings already

expensive than elsewhere. And bear in mind that Swiss main courses can be big enough to be shared between two, if the budget is tight. Not everything on the Italian price front is good news. At about 2,400 lire to the pound, the Italian exchange rate is much the same as it was in early 1994. But the pound is

over 12 per cent down on the rate in spring 1995, which formed the basis of most package holiday pricing; if you've booked with an operator whose conditions permit surcharges, you can expect to pay them. Happily, most of the larger operators are committed to fixed prices regardless of exchange rate movements. A close look at individual prices shows that Switzerland owes its top-rank position mainly to the high cost of main-course dishes – even straightforward filling dishes such as spaghetti bolognese can be disproportionately expensive. Soups, snacks, tarts, sandwiches and drinks are not necessarily more

Snow reports

Most parts of the Alps had snow over the holidays, but more is still needed. In general, Austria looks best – mid-week, all major resorts had all their lifts open, despite typical village snow depths of a modest 25cm. For more reassuring figures, head east (to Flachau, for example) or go high (to Oberurg) or both (to Oberaurerg), with

resort-level depths of 50cm to one metre; in the mega-resorts of Savoie, cover at resort level is generally no more than adequate – but Val d'Isère/Tignes has had a more serious dump than its neighbours. Further north in Haute Savoie the lower resorts have problems, La Clusaz, for example, is only half-open. Italy has had a share in the recent falls, but rain at lower altitudes around Christmas did some damage. Across the pond, there's fresh snow in Colorado – and in western Canada. More snow looks likely this week both in the Alps and the Rockies.

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Out on your own, not out on a limb

The Independent Traveller's World aims to prepare free spirits for the unexpected. By Simon Calder

Travel is terrifying. You get ill, lose your passport and money, and feel lonely – and that's just on the Gatwick Express. More seriously, events this week have brought home the chilling reality behind some of the seductive images of travel: the disappearance of a British backpacker in Thailand, and the kidnapping of two tourists in Costa Rica have concentrated the minds of intending travellers. The world beyond the glossy brochures is a perplexing place: "independent" need not imply "intrepid", but sometimes it feels as if it does.

"We are in the business of allaying fears, offering advice and, most important, providing encouragement," says Helen Caldwell, who launched the first Independent Traveller's World at Bristol's Watershed Media Centre in 1993. Since then it has expanded considerably, but remains a celebration of the sort of world that goes unrecognised by high-street travel agencies. Whether you seek reassurance

or merely insurance, the Watershed will become a real travellers' souk over the weekend of 19 to 21 February. Overland truck operators, travel publishers and discount ticket agencies will be vying for the hearts and passports of an estimated 6,000 travellers.

The idea that planning a trip should be as exciting as talking about it afterwards was developed jointly by Helen Caldwell and her partner Mark Renwick. The beauty of it, he says, is that "you can arrive with nothing but good intentions and depart with precise travel plans". People who have been there, done that and have the photos (and bruises) to prove it will reveal the rewards and risks of cycling to Peking or canoeing the Amazon. In a programme of talks and workshops, recently returned travellers provide the latest on hot new destinations and cool travel tips. Then you can check out air fares, buy a guidebook or two, and find out what health precautions you need. If a post-Christmas cashflow



Backpack wanderlust: preparation will mean that you are independent without feeling isolated

crisis has given you a nasty scare, Susan Griffith – author of *Work Your Way Around the World* – is on hand with advice about fish-packing in Iceland or teaching English in Peru.

For some, the most terrifying thing about travel in the late Nineties is the way that hi-tech seems to have hijacked it. So Mark Ellingham, founder of the *Rough Guides*, will be taking travellers on a tour around the Internet, where the *Rough Guide to the USA* now resides, constantly updated by travellers.

And should the prospect of writing about travel frighten you more than the journey itself, a travel-writing workshop could put your mind at rest. One of the contributors is Rory McLean, who went on from winning an Independent travel-writing competition to become an established writer and broadcaster. The *Independent* has been closely involved with the event from the outset, and the newspaper's travel team will again be represented at Bristol. "We see it as an excellent opportunity

to meet travellers and the travel industry, and to get feedback from readers," says Harriet O'Brien, who edits these pages. "The event helps keep us sharp – at the cutting edge of travel journalism."

Like the *Independent's* travel coverage, the event seeks to prove that you need not be young, rich nor superhumanly fit to see the real world. Neither does it shirk from the dangers of travel – both to travellers, and to the planet. Equipment companies will be demonstrating water

filters and protection against mosquitoes, while speakers focus on the need for cultural and environmental sensitivity among travellers.

The challenge of independent travel is not for everyone, and some visitors may find the main effect of the event is to deter them: better you find out on a winter weekend in Bristol than halfway up the Orinoco without a paddle. The rest of us can find inspiration, and take comfort from fellow travellers: this need not be the year of living dangerously.

Independent Traveller's World 1996

Bristol: Watershed Media Centre, 19-21 January. Admission on Friday is £2; on Saturday and Sunday, £3.50.

London: Business Design Centre, Islington, 9-11 February. Friday £3, Saturday and Sunday £5.

Edinburgh: Assembly Rooms, 54 George Street, 2-3 March. Admission £3.50.

Readers of the *Independent* and *Independent on Sunday* are entitled to a £1 discount on the normal admission price for Saturday and Sunday by producing a copy of that day's newspaper. Call 0117-930 4440 or fax 0117-987 2627 for more details of Independent Traveller's World events.

On the travel page of Section Two next Wednesday, Jeremy Skidmore of the industry journal *Travel Weekly* will be giving the inside track on the high-street travel wars.

Trouble spots

This week's advice from our man in the Foreign Office

Nepal: "Driving and vehicle maintenance standards are poor and the cause of frequent accidents. Travel by long-distance bus is a cause for particular concern."

Cote d'Ivoire: "Has its full share of street crime, armed robbery and car theft. In Abidjan, mugging is particularly rife on the two bridges. Visitors should not cross these on foot."

Egypt: "Extremists have warned foreigners not to visit Egypt, most recently in late 1995... Visitors should be vigilant, and are reminded to behave and dress discreetly."

Kazakhstan: "There has been an increase in attacks on the streets of larger cities, including Almaty. Do not walk the streets alone at night, or travel in unmarked taxis. Diphtheria cases are increasing. Seek medical advice before travelling."

Dominican Republic: "The situation in Haiti does not affect the tourist areas in the Dominican Republic, which are a considerable distance from the border. Tourists are nevertheless advised to keep themselves informed of developments."

Foreign Office travel advice is available on 0171-270 4129; on BBC2 Ceefax page 564 onwards; and on the Internet at <http://www.fco.gov.uk/>

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motoring

A blast from the past

The supercharger is back. And this time it's environmentally friendly. By Phil Llewellyn

The word "supercharger" is one of the most evocative in motoring vocabulary. No real knowledge of automotive technology is needed to associate it with a special type of power, and enthusiasts recall when supercharged machines from the likes of Alfa Romeo, Mercedes, Bentley and Bugatti ruled the Grand Prix roost.

Strong associations with yesterday's mile-eating thoroughbreds make one wonder why Britain's thriving outpost of the Mercedes-Benz empire – now the marque's third biggest market after Germany and America – has decided not to put a supercharger badge on the tail of the C230K saloon. Mercedes's first supercharged car for more than 50 years. According to one theory, the stodgy German equivalent, *Kompressor*, is less likely to attract the attention of the police.

Jaguar and Aston Martin have launched supercharged cars in recent years, and Mercedes's decision to take the same route with this more affordable addition to the C-class range is another indication that the supercharger is making a comeback. The swift and stylish SLK two-seater will be available with the new engine when it goes on sale in Britain a year from now. Other models are in the pipeline.

All of which poses several questions. What does the supercharger do: what are its advantages; and how does it differ from the more familiar turbocharger?

Car buffs frequently refer to a supercharger as a "blower", because it blows air into the combustion chambers under pressure and increases efficiency to a remarkable extent. The supercharged Alfa Romeos that dominated Grand Prix racing after the



Second World War had 1.5-litre engines whose 450bhp was about 10 times as much as the typical road-car engine of that size produced.

Thanks to its "blower", the new Mercedes saloon's four-cylinder, 2.3-litre engine provides exactly as much muscle (193bhp) as the C280 model's six-cylinder, 2.8-litre. But there is a distinct difference in the way the power is delivered. One of the supercharged engine's basic advantages is that it generates a lot of torque. So, for instance, the C230K is almost a second faster from zero to 60mph than the naturally aspirated C280. This appears to be a rare instance of getting something for nothing: increased performance is accompanied by the prospect of much lower fuel bills. According to the official test figures, the *Kompressor* is about 20 per cent more economical than its 2.8-litre stable-mate.

That is not the only good



Torque of the town: The supercharger is no longer a gas-guzzling bonnet bummer like that featured in the 'Mad Max' movies (inset). Mercedes's stylish supercharged 2.3-litre C230K (main photo and left) offers better economy and as much power as its 2.8-litre stablemate.

news, according to Dr Leopold Mikulic, the engineer in charge of developing Mercedes's petrol engines. Supercharging used to be regarded simply as a way to increase power, but now, he explains, "the supercharger is used for meeting contemporary demands such as lower exhaust emissions. In short, supercharging allows us to combine the economic efficiency of a four-cylinder engine with the power of a six-cylinder unit." This is partly

because the C230K's catalytic converter gets up to full working temperature from a cold start more quickly. The engine beats the European test figure for carbon monoxide emissions by 70 per cent and for nitrogen oxide emissions by 20 per cent.

The supercharger's rival, the turbocharger, first became popular in the mid-1970s. Initially thanks to Porsche and Saab, its main drawback was "lag" (slow response). Serious

power tended to arrive suddenly, because this type of "blower" is driven by gas-flow in the exhaust system. The supercharger has a direct link to the engine, so response is very much sharper.

The supercharging concept goes back to 1860, but credit for the first production car with a supercharged engine as standard goes to Daimler-Motoren-Gesellschaft – which became a part of Mercedes-Benz – in 1922.

Mercedes welcomed the new technology, creating a series of formidable racing and touring cars. Driven by the great Rudolf Caracciola, the relatively lightweight Mercedes SSKL packed a 300bhp punch and won three of 1931's big events. They included Italy's madcap Mille Miglia – a race contested over 1000 miles of public roads that were, in theory, closed to non-competing vehicles.

The C230K's state-of-the-art supercharger features two

three-lobed rotors which compress air by spinning at up to 12,000rpm. My only complaint about this engine is that Mercedes was obliged to reduce the noise levels that have always been associated with superchargers. That makes sense from an environmental viewpoint, but eliminates the spine-tingling aural pleasure.

Prices for the C230K range from £25,300 to £28,400, depending on the level of equipment. Until the SLK sports car arrives in 1997, this is the nearest you can get to being a latter-day Caracciola. He was at the wheel in 1938, when a streamlined version of the supercharged Mercedes W125 grand prix car blasted along the Frankfurt-Darmstadt autobahn at 269mph. The new *Kompressor* is much slower than that, of course, but headlines as big as those that accompanied Caracciola's record-breaking feat are guaranteed if you are caught exploiting its 145mph top speed in Britain.

road test
Fiat Bravo

Fiat might recently have modelled its cars on grocery boxes, but the Italian giant has become innovative and quality conscious in its design. The Bravo and Brava are the most eye-catching mainstream hatchbacks you're likely to see this decade.

The most beguiling of the pair is the Bravo, its shinky skin defining a shape of great muscularity and fluidity. There's a structural integrity about this car that the supplanting Tipo never quite achieved. Much greater crash safety and security, too.

On test the 1.8ELX was hard-edged when extended, but the engine was barely audible when cruising. Wind and tyre noise were well suppressed. I have sat in more supportive seats, but no five-door in this sector has more room or style. I liked the responsive power steering, the solid, all square stance on twisty roads, the firm brakes and the crisp, easy gear-change. Switches and vents all reflect painstaking attention to detail.

Models start at £9,608 for the 1.4S. The five-door 1.6SX Brava, with more boot space, costs £11,424. The 1.8 ELX, with anti-lock brakes, is £13,293. The five-cylinder 2.0 and turbo-diesel will be available later in the year. Fiat claims prices are 3-5 per cent below the competition and even the cheapest model has a driver's airbag, power steering, central locking, engine immobiliser and purpose built audio equipment.

Roger Bell

Specifications

Fiat Bravo 1.8HLX, £12,580. Engine: 1747cc, four cylinders, 16 valves. 113bhp at 5800rpm. Transmission: five speed manual gearbox, front-wheel drive. Top speed 120mph, 0-60mph in 9.7 seconds, average consumption 35.9mpg.

Rivals

Ford Escort 1.8Si three-door, £12,890. Recent improvements in handling and refinement. Lacks Ford's brio, but the 1.5 version car goes well. Honda Civic 1.6 ES1 three-door, £13,250. Small, high-revving engine gives strong performance. Latest model is prettier than the old "clubback". Peugeot 306 2.0 XS, £13,810. One of the class benchmarks. Pretty, well-packaged car with plenty of zip, fine handling and comfortable ride. Rover 216 Si three-door, £12,195. Cute new in-house Rover 200 is smaller than the car it supplants, and not as roomy as its Fiat competitor. Lively performance, agile handling and fun to drive.

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Coming soon to a forecourt near you

Gavin Green on the new models for the new year

Car makers are great at playing follow-my-leader. One company innovates and makes a mint, and after due caution, market research, soul searching or vacillation the others jump in. This year the three leads they are following en masse are: people carriers (chasing joint pioneers Chrysler and Renault), two-seater roadsters (following the Mazda MX-5 and last year's MGF) and baby cars (after the 37-year-old Mini, proof that some leaders take a long time to follow).

Ford would not describe its new baby car, set for launch in the autumn, as a "Mini rival". It's a bit too big; not novel enough. Being based closely on the Ford Ka "sub-B" prototype shown at various motor shows over the past couple of years, it is effectively a cut-down Fiesta in trendy clothing. It will win no prizes for technical ingenuity; another Issigonis Mini it is not.

But it is the precursor to a number of new small cars – shorter than Fiestas or Corsas – aimed at economy-minded city drivers. More radical babies follow later this decade, among them the Mercedes A-class (Metro size on the outside, Mondeo size inside), the ritz French-built Smart Car (co-developed by Smart and Mercedes, and to feature an electric option), and a rival from Vauxhall, code-named the S-car.

People carriers (seven-seater family "vans") are now starting to get old hat. It's well over a decade since Chrysler launched the Voyager van in America, and Renault the prettier Espace soon after in Europe. None the less, sales continue to grow. Among the late entrants this year are Vauxhall, with a new American-made vehicle called the Sintra; Mercedes, about to launch a dull-looking but doubtless fine-driving vehicle called the Viano, to be built in Spain; and Seat, with its version of the Ford Galaxy/Volkswagen Sharan, called the Alhambra. Chrysler will



As driven by Bond: BMW's Z3, which comes to Britain in the summer

also begin to sell right-hand-drive versions of its new Voyager, designed in America but assembled in Austria. It's likely to be the most impressive people carrier of the year.

However, if you're keen on the versatility of a seven-seater van, I'd go ahead and buy the best of last year's releases, the Galaxy or Sharan (same car, different badges). The offerings in 1996 are unlikely to be any better.

Europe deserted the roadster market in the Sixties and Seventies. Mazda eventually showed the slow-witted Europeans that there were riches in ragtopp after all. Rover (MG), the one-time dominator, got back in last year. This year we'll see the return of BMW, Mercedes, Porsche, Renault and, in Britain, Alfa Romeo.

The new BMW Z3 has already been widely seen as the German interloper, taking what should have been Aston Martin's place as James Bond's company car in *Goldeneye*. It's a pretty little four-cylinder thing, due in Britain in the summer for under £20,000.

Mercedes, of course, never gave up building roadsters. They've been building SLs for film stars (usually starlets).

models and other rich, non-renting types for years. At the end of this year, they'll get back into the "affordable" sector. Being Mercedes, their definition of affordable is a little different from yours or mine, but £25,000 for the base model, and about £29,000 for the supercharged version (see above) does sound like good value for the new SLK.

Porsche will charge similar money for its new Boxster 986, a mid-engined open-top two-seater that replaces the 986 and the long-lived 928. Renault's £25,000 offering, the Sports Spider, is a raw, minimalist racer-for-the-road, due here in the spring.

Finally, the Alfa Spider name makes a comeback in the UK early this year, when the gorgeous new Alfa – on sale in Europe for almost a year – finally makes it across the Channel. It's joined by a GTV hardtop coupe. They're further proof of the styling and technological renaissance going on within the Fiat group.

The most important new British car of the year will be the new Jaguar XK8 coupé, due in October. It replaces the 20-year-old XJS, looks more like an updated E-type,

and features Jaguar's new V8 engine, built by Ford in Bridgend, Wales. There'll be convertible and hardtop coupé versions. In 1997, the new V8 engine goes into the XJ6 saloon, replacing the current straight-six unit.

BMW will launch the new 5-series in Britain in April. I've already had an early drive here. It's probably the best executive car of them all.

Another potential class winner is the new Renault Megane, also coming in the spring to replace the R19. It competes in the Escort sector, where it will give the current "best buy" (the new Fiat Bravo/Brava) a close contest. Whatever the outcome, they both set new standards in what has been, for many years, a technologically unadventurous sector.

The best mainstream new car of the year? Probably the Megane. The prettiest? The Alfa Spider. Best family car? Either of the Mercedes estates. The most influential? The Ford baby car. The biggest technical breakthrough? Too early to say whether there'll be one at all. But, with such a follow-my-leader year in prospect, we are getting impatient.

The house is a dream. The neighbour is a nightmare

Angela Lambert withstood abusive calls, blaring radios and spying. But then came the brick through the window...

I suffered a bad neighbour for 12 years, and although I may never love another house as much – the perfect, rambling, tall and many-roomed Victorian family home – our neighbour (let me call her Alice, which wasn't her name) drove us away in the end. She was spiteful, cunning, obnoxious, opportunistic and devious. In retrospect, I think the sad truth is that she was probably just desperately lonely and deeply envious of our noisy, busy family life.

Alice was a single woman in her fifties when I, then a young divorcee, moved in to the house next to hers, along with my three children and our caravan of cats, rabbits, au pair girls, friends and followers. Our new neighbour came, I suspect, from what used to be called "a good family"; at any rate, she bore a famous surname.

Although her house was large and double-fronted – twice the size of ours, with at least eight bedrooms and four grand reception rooms – she lived alone, and never had visitors. In the early days, when I still believed that a sensible chat over a nice cup of tea would surely sort things out, I sometimes knocked on her door. I think I set foot inside the house once, but never got beyond the kitchen or saw into the other

rooms whose curtains were usually drawn. She even gardened by torchlight, and seemed to be a complete recluse.

Alice pretended that a number of old ladies lived in her care, although I never saw any: not in the garden (which was large) or the kitchen (whose window faced ours). If they did exist, I pity them, but they were probably a figment of her imagination, used to add weight and self-righteousness to her complaints about our behaviour.

Our two houses shared a party wall, and Alice evidently slept in the bedroom adjoining mine on the other side. She must have spent hours with her ear pressed to a glass pressed against my bedroom wall; at any rate, her frequent telephonic abuse (often in ludicrous disguised voices) betrayed a startlingly accurate knowledge of what went on in there. When she was particularly exercised about some imaginary misdemeanour of mine she would get up at 4am, stand on the other side of the wall inches from the head of my bed and rattle a teacup in its saucer, saying piercingly to some imaginary old lady, "Here you are dear, I've brought you a nice cup of tea!" Then she would switch the radio on, tune in to Radio One and leave it to blare fortissimo until

she caught sight of me in the kitchen and was satisfied that I had been roused.

After more than a year of this I tried taking her to court for breach of my right to enjoy the quiet pleasure of my home. This was a mistake. The dawn awakening by teacup and Radio One became worse than ever, and she counter-sued for disturbance and noise. On the day of the court case she withdrew her claim and I, scenting peace, agreed to withdraw mine. I was wrong. Her attacks redoubled, until the very air of my rooms vibrated with the intensity of her hatred. I felt she watched us night and day – nor was this paranoia, as her lengthy missives proved. She spied on all our activities, abusing my teenage daughter with most unapologetic obscenities as the poor girl kissed her boyfriend goodnight on our front doorstep, hurled insults at my mild-mannered son and tried to electrocute our pet rabbit.

She made phone calls to the police. Once she claimed that my son and several friends were on the roof, hurling tiles and lumps of earth and moss into her garden. The police arrived on our doorstep – more for the protection of the boys. I think, then, in response to Alice – and rang the doorbell. As luck would have it,



Angela Lambert revisits the family home she felt forced to leave because of her neighbour. Photo: Jane Baker

the door was opened promptly by my accused son, Johnnie. A policeman asked to see his hands. Baffled and innocent, Johnnie extended palms that, far from being spotless, "All right, sorry. You ever climb on the roof, by the way?"

"No," said Johnnie, with the air of one upon whom a great idea has dawned.

"Well don't, will you? It's dangerous," said the policeman as he left, winking sympathetically at me.

None of this made any difference to Alice, whose persecution grew increasingly demented. She would deliver elaborate letters, typed entirely in capitals. They assumed a tone of heavy irony along the lines of: "Well, Mrs Lambert, perhaps now you're satisfied! Four old ladies now live

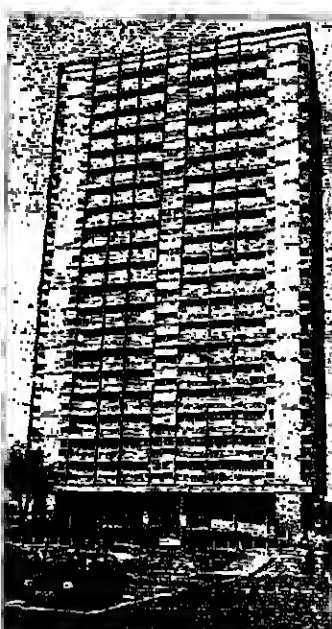
in terror of your approach, persecuted by you and your dear children. That must be very gratifying to your self-esteem." There would be pages more in the same vein. She even hurled a brick through my beautiful late-Victorian stained glass door, and then called to provide a detailed description of the "street-urchin" who, she said, had done the deed.

Noise and its effects on your health

According to the scientific experts, noise can have serious detrimental effects on health. It causes stress, anxiety and depression; heightens aggression and deprives the sufferer of sleep and relaxation. Very loud noise (over 60 decibels) can increase the heart rate, leading to palpitations or even angina and heart disease. Some believe it has a greater physical effect on the body than any other pollutant. A survey carried out by the Building Research Establishment last year found that up to two thirds of the population are regularly exposed to levels of noise above the 35-decibel limit recommended by the World Health Organisation.

That was the last straw. I thought her next violence might be directed against us. We felt we had no option but to give up our much-loved home. We moved far away from Alice. Her feud against us had always seemed pointless. Only now can I regard her with some sympathy. It does seem perfectly obvious to me that she was stark-raving crackers.

There goes the neighbourhood: the escalating war next door



The tower block where a 13th-floor flat was firebombed during a party

Noisy neighbours are the curse of suburbia. Ask anyone who lives next door to a yapping dog or a semi-detached disco. It is not hard to see why over the past few years they have become one of Britain's chief bugbears. Feuds over the garden fence are going to court, several degenerating into violence and some ending in tragedy. Domestic noise is the most frequent complaint received by local authorities in England and Wales who record more than 100,000 calls each year, compared to 33,000 in 1982.

Neighbourhood disputes over noise have led to at least 17 killings and suicides during the last three years. People are being driven mad by the thumping beat from stereos or the drilling and hammering of midnight DIY enthusiasts. Among the worst cases was an incident last July when a British Telecom engineer

snapped after suffering prolonged, excessive noise from his neighbours' rowdy parties. He fire-bombed their flat, causing the death of a 26-year-old mother who fell from the 13th floor in the ensuing panic.

In 1993, a man caused the death of a three-year-old boy by setting fire to his upstairs neighbour's flat in north London. During his trial at the Old Bailey, the court heard that he had previously sought help from the police and local MP to silence the noise; he had raised a petition and even written to the Prime Minister, all to no avail.

One morning, he lost control and told his neighbour to get her children out, because he was going to set her flat on fire. Then he doused the stairs in petrol and set them alight. The boy was trapped in a bedroom and died.

On-the-spot fines of £40 for

people who ignore council or police warnings about noise are to be introduced under new Government legislation. It is one of several antidotes which have been considered, many of which involve environmental health officers in a more direct, and subsequently more dangerous, role.

The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health says more of its members are being assaulted when trying to carry out their jobs. In Ealing, west London, an officer was beaten up trying to turn down a stereo after complaints from those living nearby. Many officers are reluctant to deal with a rowdy party unless the police are in attendance.

Not all noise disputes are violent, although an increasing number end up in court. The singer Whitney Houston's hit song "I Will Always Love You" brought two people to the dock when a woman in south London and

another in Middlesbrough were both jailed for playing it at excessive volume.

In 1993, Poole County Court in Dorset banned a 55-year-old grandmother from playing her Jim Reeves records after complaints from neighbours. To make sure she complied, environmental health officers commandeered her gramophone.

One of the most celebrated noise cases was that of Corky, a cockerel in Devon that crowed so loudly at dawn that its owner received a noise abatement order from the council to silence it between midnight and 7am.

In many instances, a diplomatic chat over the garden fence has proved enough to cool a dispute, but people are still eager to take the law into their own hands. Perhaps the bravest example is that of a 52-year-old Southampton woman who aimed her garden hose at a stereo

pounding out heavy metal music at a biker party next door. It was a last-ditch attempt to silence the din after requests to turn it down were ignored and repeated calls to the police went unheeded. It worked – the speakers faltered and died as the water hit them.

For some, no amount of warnings and threats seem to work. An 18-year-old Leicester woman who played her stereo in the early hours of the morning at a disturbingly high volume was visited 10 times by a council team investigating complaints, but continued to blast her neighbours through the night. Magistrates found her guilty of 10 charges of causing noise nuisance and fined her £12,500. She admits it will take a lifetime to pay, during which there will doubtless be many more violent and tragic cases brought to court.



Corky the cockerel, whose owner was ordered to silence him

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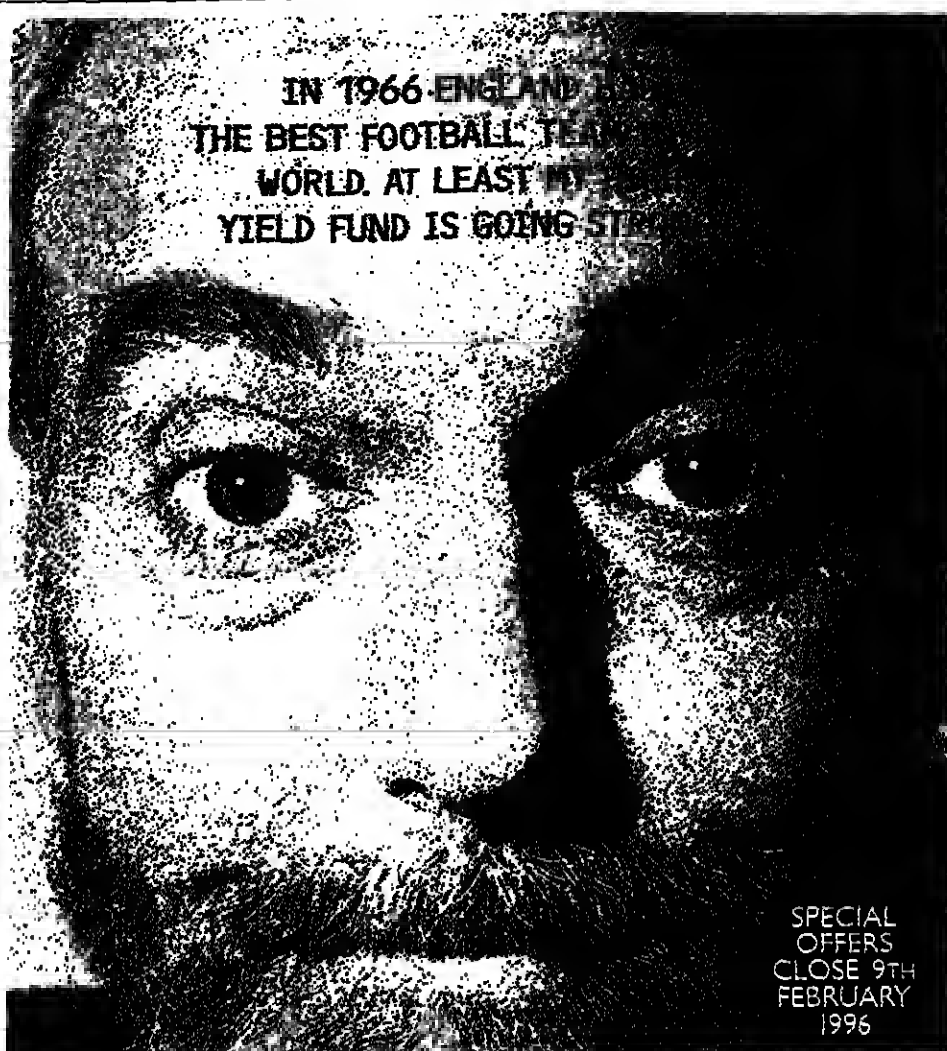
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Four year old spacious detached in quiet close. 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money

Two sayings of JK Galbraith are well worth remembering at this time of year. The first is that 'pundits forecast not because they know, but because they are asked' while the second is that 'the only difference is between those who know they don't know and those who don't know they don't know'



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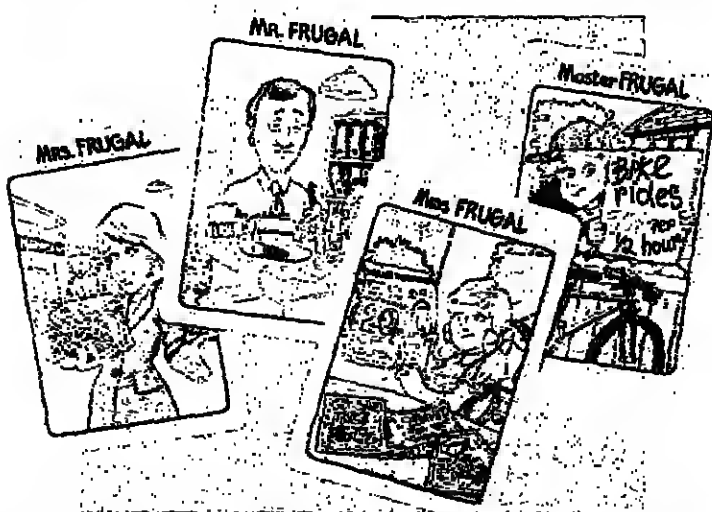
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shouldn't you make a
Resolution to keep
something up your sleeve?**



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After the season of retrospectives, now for the New Year forecasts. This is the time of the year when brokers, economists and pundits alike are persuaded to make their forecasts for shares and markets in the year ahead. Quite why this has become such a ritual is not entirely clear, since the exercise is rarely one that shows forecasters in the best light. Last year I quoted the economist J K Galbraith's definitive assessment of the prediction business. Pundits "forecast not because they know, but because they are asked", a saying whose fundamental truth is never so well borne out as it is at this time of year.

Now I learn of Galbraith's other *bon mot* on the subject: "The only difference is between those who know they don't know and those who don't know they don't know". The forecasters you really have to worry about are those in the latter camp.

My impression is that most pundits are much happier today to hedge their predictions around with caveats than they were 20 years ago, when the statistical evidence that forecasting the stock market is a mug's game was less widely appreciated than it is today.



JONATHAN DAVIS
INVESTMENTS

The real problem with New Year forecasts of course is that the rules of the game are not closely attuned with reality. Most people, it is true, do tend to look at their investments as the end of the year approaches, and for professional fund managers in particular the end of December is a critical time, since that is when their annual performance is calculated and bonuses are decided. The New Year is a good time to spring clean portfolios - to clear out some of their dog-eared shares and place some new bets for the year ahead.

This annual exercise does have some effect on the way that prices move around the New Year. But any such effect soon wears off, and big changes in market sentiment tend to happen at fairly random intervals throughout the year. Any sudden reversals tend to

come when they are least expected, as happened in February 1994. A defining characteristic of almost any genuine market, after all, is that prices rarely if ever behave in a linear fashion. As JP Morgan famously observed when asked what he thought the market would do next, he replied: "It will fluctuate".

That is one reason why the performance of Wall Street over the last year has been so dramatic. It started going up from the start of 1995 and, in a complete reversal of normal practice, has barely stopped going up since. It seems to be starting the new year in much the same way as it ended the old one. Most UK pundits - and most professional investors - had miscalculated the momentum behind Wall Street's rise and have been scrambling to catch up ever since.

Will they do better this year? Having ploughed through all the main published New Year forecasts in the last week, it is clear that opinion is more evenly divided this year about how long Wall Street can keep up its momentum - but only a brave few, after last year's mauling, are prepared to stick their necks out and say that Wall Street's run is over.

Some brave souls, including both Robin Griffiths and David Schwartz, whose

views I have mentioned here before, think that the Dow Jones index, up 35 per cent last year, will not run out of steam until it has breached the 6,000 level. This year of course is a Presidential election year, which tend to be good for shares, and my guess is that their bullishness may well prove to be right.

For the UK stock market, the outlook is much more uncertain. We too have an election on the horizon, although with the rapidly vanishing Tory majority in Parliament, its timing cannot be predicted with any precision. That would normally tend to dampen sentiment, but against that has to be set the strong likelihood of a further wave of bids and deals, at least in the first half of the year.

There is a good rule of thumb which says that buying shares when the dividend yield of the market is below 4 per cent at the start of the year is rarely that profitable, so nobody should expect any lasting fireworks from the London market. If you do have money to put into equities on a long-term view, this looks like being the year when genuine price competition between providers will finally make Peps - and index tracking Peps in particular - the cheap commodity that they ought to

be. I also stick confidently to my view that this at last will be the year when house prices do finally start to move upwards, and that property and construction shares will be rewarding.

Overseas, the two main issues are what happens to Tokyo and the emerging markets. The Nikkei index is up by over third since its low last year, and if there is one thing on which UK fund managers seem to be agreed it is that the Japanese market will continue to do well. Such a consensus is itself usually grounds for caution, and the high levels of debt in the Japanese corporate sector make it highly likely that progress will continue to be volatile.

The poor performance of emerging markets last year was for many fund managers the disappointment that mirrored the surprise outperformance on Wall Street. The trouble here is that the type of country now classified as an emerging market is so varied that generalisation is virtually impossible. Contrary to the majority view, I shall be surprised if they do that well as a group this year - but on this particular issue, if you press me, I am more than happy to know what I do not know what will happen between now and next December. Nor, I strongly suspect, does anybody else.

Thaw may bring cold comfort for householders

Household insurance should cover burst pipes caused by frost, but it pays to check the wording. By Paul Gosling

This winter's freeze has already caused a £500m bill for frost damage and 75 per cent of all claims in the past two weeks have been for burst pipes.

Householders returning after a Christmas holiday to burst pipes and waterlogged homes might tell themselves that it could be worse. Home and contents insurance should pay for new pipes and damage to building and belongings where frost has caused the burst, although Commercial Union is one of few insurers who does not charge a £50 to £200 excess on claims.

If the same thing had happened because of corrosion, the cost of replacement pipes - which can be several hundred pounds - would not be covered.

The water companies have problems of their own with burst pipes and leaking mains. But some of them are wrongly claiming that householders are not normally covered for pipe bursts from frost between the stopcock and a property boundary. Colin Winsper, managing director of South Staffordshire Water, said: "There are one or two [insurers] that cover repair to pipe work but very, very few." This view was also expressed by representatives of Anglian Water and North Surrey Water, which sell policies.

Leaflets put out by Anglian Water and South Staffs Water promoting policies underwritten by Leatherhead-based Gesa (Group European Assistance) both say: "What may surprise you is that in the event of a flood caused by a burst pipe, it's unlikely that a standard home insurance policy will cover the cost of repairs." The brochure does point out that a standard home insurance policy provides cover for accidental damage to water supply pipes or drains, but fails to explain that insurers classify frost damage as accidental.

John Kirkman of Green Flag, which underwrites the policies offered by 12 supply companies, including North Surrey and Yorkshire Water, added: "Our understanding is that the mains supply to a house is not covered." But the Association of British Insurers said that it believed all standard home insurance policies included cover for bursts of the supply pipes arising from frost. And in an extensive phone round of insurers the *Independent* could find none whose policies excluded underground pipe bursts from frost.

Tony McMahon, claims manager of Sun Alliance Connections, suggested: "Each individual should check their policy carefully. The wording may vary from insurer to insurer and policy to policy. The main exclusion

will be if a property is uninhabited or unoccupied."

The worst problems face occupants who took a winter holiday and failed to take precautions against frost. Householders may even find they have lost their insurance cover if the absence was prolonged - either over 30 days or 60 days, according to the policy - and they did not make special arrangements with their insurer.

Insurers will normally insist on either central heating being kept on, or water supplies switched off at the stopcock, and homes being visited daily during a long absence or weekly in the case of second homes. In rare instances insurers may require water systems to be drained.

There are other cases where policies may not provide cover. Unprotected external pipes, and those in outbuildings, are not covered by Direct Line's policies, though they are by most insurers.

Standard buildings and contents policies give cover for consequential damage (such as to possessions, plasterwork and ceilings) from burst pipes, whether they are caused by frost or wear and tear. But standard home policies only cover replacement costs of pipes where they have been "accidentally" damaged, a definition that includes bursts caused by frost.

Several water supply companies are offering policies that provide cover against bursts caused by wear and tear - which Gesa, underwriters of some of the policies, points out normally cause 90 per cent of bursts. Taking out a supplementary policy may be justified, but householders need to be aware of the limited benefits they are gaining. Gesa's Home Service Scheme costs an annual premium of £45, for which cover is obtained for up to £150 for internal plumbing emergencies, and up to £550 for external pipe bursts, including those caused by wear and tear.

Green Flag's Home Assist policy, at £72 a year, is more extensive, and covers other home emergencies, such as faulty central heating boilers, and its Home Assist Plus policy, at £96, also covers roofing problems. Cover is limited to £100 of parts and material, plus four hours of labour. Gesa's and Green Flag's policies contain no excess charges for claimants to pay.

One of the advantages of home assistance policies is that the insurer will engage the plumber on behalf of the householder, but some insurers, such as Touchline, also offer this facility.

The benefits of insurance are demonstrated by 72 year old Mrs Cecilia Wilson of

Kilwinning in Ayrshire. She woke up last Saturday morning to find the flat upstairs had been flooded from a burst pipe. When the water cascaded into her flat it destroyed her ceiling, the television, video and various bits of furniture.

Mrs Wilson has a standard home and contents policy with Direct Line, which is not only paying to replace damaged items, but is also meeting any costs from her husband having to stay in a nursing home while the flat is made habitable. Mr Wilson was in hospital when the burst took place.

Mrs Wilson is grateful to her insurers. "They have been absolutely splendid," she said. "They came in right away. I don't know how much it is all going to cost, but the insurer is going to pay it direct."

Green Flag: 0800 800688
Gesa: 01372 366701



Pipe nightmares: insurers offer varying levels of cover for burst pipes, but they should classify damage due to frost as accidental

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Day Night

By ☐ 15th March 1996

Banking on the right Tessa

A new generation Tessas has arrived, offering attractive rates of return. But, as always, there are catches. By Clifford German

The big banks and building societies have all now revealed their terms for the new generation of tax exempt special savings accounts. As every Tessa holder knows by now, the whole of the capital accumulated in the first generation of Tessas, up to the maximum holding of £9,000, can be put back into a new Tessa, but the accumulated tax-free interest must be redeployed elsewhere.

Holders of maturing Tessas can roll over all or part of their capital with their existing provider, or transfer to a different one without penalty. Either way they have up to six months to do so. No one need rush to decide. But in order to ensure that the new account remains tax-free, anyone who does want to transfer rather than roll over more than £3,000 needs to get a certificate of entitlement from the original supplier.

Tessas are not necessarily the best place to invest or even reinvest your money. Over the last five years investors would have done better on a corporate bond (if they had existed), and on a personal equity plan invested in UK shares. But Tessas are super-safe and that is what matters most to many investors.

In general the bigger providers offer lower rates, relying on their name and reputation. The smaller providers – who ran away with the prizes for the best returns on first generation Tessas – are once again offering the best rates of return.

But interest rates offered on day one are not the only thing investors need to watch. Some rates are fixed for the full five years while others are liable to change. Rates vary according to the amount invested, and some are restricted to existing customers only. Others – like the Halifax, for example – tweak the basic rates with a maturity bonus which is payable at the end of five

years. Another variation on the rates theme is to offer an escalating rate over five years.

Some institutions have opted for loyalty bonuses payable only to customers who have rolled over an existing Tessa, and a small number – including Lloyds Bank, Kleinwort Benson and Birmingham Midshires – offer optional returns which are linked to future stock market performance.

Most accounts allow holders to draw interest during the life of the Tessa but some either insist the interest accumulates or withhold the maturity bonus if holders want to draw it.

Investors must also watch out for transfer penalties, which like mortgage redemption penalties effectively lock customers in once they have opened their new account. Penalties can go as high as 180 days loss of interest on fixed-rate Tessas, if customers try to find a better rate elsewhere later on. Straightforward withdrawals are not penalised, although they do lose their tax-free status.

The highest rate on a variable rate Tessa of £9,000 – the maximum sum which can be reinvested – is 8 per cent from Northern Rock, which initially offered 7.25 per cent before Christmas and then decided to lift its rates higher to establish itself as the market leader.

Elsewhere the best rate is 7.75 per cent from Cheltenham & Gloucester, which offers the same rate on amounts as low as £1,000 – so long as they are renewing existing C&G Tessas. The transfer fee is also only £30. National Counties pays 5 per cent on £1,000 rising to 7.5 per cent on £9,000 with a 90 day interest penalty. Bradford & Bingley offers 5.75 per cent on minimum sums of £500 rising in steps to 6.75 per cent on £9,000, but a maturity bonus of 0.75 per cent a year is also payable for investors who last



Northern Rock is among those offering good fixed rates

the course, and only one month's notice without penalty is required to transfer. Birmingham Midshires offers 7.25 per cent on sums as small as £3,000 but wants 180 days interest from transfers. Alliance & Leicester offers 7.25 per cent, but imposes 60 days loss of interest on transfers.

Natwest Bank pays the best rate among the clearing banks with 7.19 per cent compound on sums from £5,000 upwards if interest is not drawn – but it charges 180 days interest on transfers, and does not allow additions after the first year.

Bristol & West pays 4.9 per cent on sums as small as £500 rising in steps to 7 per cent on £9,000, and combines a maturity bonus of 1 per cent on the first year investment with a similar sum as a loyalty bonus for existing customers. Three months notice is required and three months loss of interest is charged on transfers.

Darlington Building Society offers 7.5 per cent to existing Tessa holders on sums as small as £1 – but docks 60 days interest

from transfers. Monmouthshire pays 7.6 per cent to roll-over customers on as little as £1 and charges just one month's interest on transfers.

Some of the bigger players offer much less generous rates. Abbey National for example is offering just 6 per cent on sums of £3,000 rising to 6.6 per cent on the maximum roll-over fund of £9,000, while the Halifax is offering just 5.9 per cent, with a terminal bonus of 2.5 per cent if it is held to maturity, bringing the overall rate up to 7.4 per cent.

The best fixed rates on offer include 7.64 per cent fixed on £9,000 from Northern Rock, but the penalty for transferring is 180 days interest plus a £30 fee. West Bromwich offers 7.55 per cent fixed with 28 days notice and 180 days loss of interest to deter subsequent transfers.

Bradford & Bingley offers 7.5 per cent fixed, but one month's notice plus 180 days loss of interest is required for transfers. Barclays Bank pays 7.5 per cent fixed on amounts of £7,500 upwards

with a month's notice and a variable fee for early withdrawals. Sun Banking offers a 7.5 per cent fixed rate carrot on maximum amounts, and a 180 notice plus 180 days loss of interest stick on transfers.

Yorkshire Building Society offers 7.3 per cent to existing customers with the full amount to roll over with an 180 loss of interest in years one and two, dropping to 90 days thereafter. Only 7 per cent is paid by Abbey National's fixed rate account, but the withdrawal fee is only £20.

Britannia Building Society offers 7.25 per cent fixed on the full £9,000 to its existing Tessa holders and 7.15 per cent fixed to new investors but there is no transfer penalty and both get a 1 per cent bonus after a year. The Derbyshire offers 7.2 per cent fixed on full roll-overs from existing customers, but levies 180 days interest on transfers.

Compiled with the help of data analysts Moneyfacts and financial advisers Johnson Fry.

How to pep up investments with tracker funds and corporate bonds

Low-cost tax-free personal equity plans investing in a mix of shares chosen to "track" the UK stock market are leading the fight to challenge the new Tessas. They are targeted at people who think fixed-rate Tessas with heavy penalties for changing your mind are a bit off and variable rates are unexciting, and at investors who have reached their tax-free limit of £9,000 in a Tessa and need to reinvest their accumulated interest and future savings elsewhere.

Just six months ago, most experts thought that Tessa investors would turn to Peps investing in corporate bonds (ie fixed-interest loan stocks issued by UK companies).

Figures compiled by Baronworth currently quotes tax-free running yields (excluding any gains and losses on maturing bonds) of anything from 7.5 per cent to 8.5 per cent net of charges. But on average, corporate bond Peps offer perhaps 1 per cent more than a new-style Tessa.

They are invested in a range of bonds, so that the risk of a company going bust and defaulting is reduced to an acceptable minimum. The main risk to the capital will come only if interest rates generally start to rise significantly, so that the fixed interest coupons payable on most corporate bonds start to look unattractive and prices fall.

But the sharp rise in share prices on the London stock market has significantly increased the attractions of investments in shares, unit trusts, investment trusts and especially in tax-free Peps. Morgan Grenfell estimates that demand for Peps has risen 25 per cent over the past year, and 450,000 investors will actually take out a Pep between now and the end of

the tax year. According to analysts Mintel, 10 per cent of them will be using the money from maturing Tessas.

The interest in Peps is being actively encouraged by signs of a price war on charges. This week Fidelity Investments – the aggressive American-based fund managers – threw down the gauntlet by offering MoneyBuilder Index, a Pep investing in a range of shares selected to match the movements of the top 100 UK shares. Trackers are cheap to manage and there are no entry charges, the full-amount subscribed is invested, there are no exit charges to take the money out (and, unlike Tessas, the tax-free status is not lost if the money is withdrawn), and the annual management charge including any fee for creating the Pep is just 0.5 per cent a year. On a maximum investment of £6,000 the total charges are just £30 a year.

It undercuts the previous cheapest Pep, a tracker fund based on the All-share index introduced by Legal & General last year, which charged 0.5 per cent plus £25 plus VAT – a total of £59 a year to manage a £6,000 investment. It also undercuts the other market leaders, Gartmore, HSBC, Kleinwort Benson and Virgin, all of whom charge 1 per cent on similar products.

L&G immediately abolished their £25 fee to match Fidelity and other providers are expected to introduce low-cost Peps shortly. Between them they should generate attractive low-cost competition for investors if share prices continue to rise.

Weekly corporate bond pep tables are available from Baronworth, 0181-518 1218

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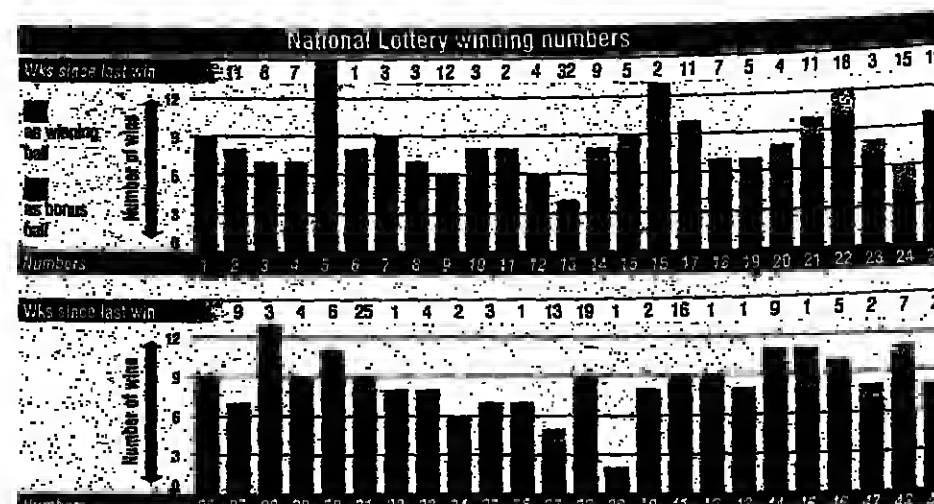
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The winning numbers are...

The vital statistics behind today's record jackpot. By Clifford German



This table tells you everything you need to know to make your winning selection. In theory

National lottery fever reaches boiling point today after two successive rollovers. The average weekly stake has been running around £65m, and the jackpot something over £9m, but the prospect of a double jackpot last week took the stake to £78m and the jackpot to £23.9m.

The lure of the first-ever treble jackpot pay-out this week is expected to persuade millions of occasional players to try their luck. On average something approaching 30 million people play the lottery more or less regularly, and over 80 per cent of the adult population have played at some time or another. It is not hard to imagine that a record number will be taking part this evening.

The average stake could also rise from £2 or £3 to £3 or £4 a head, taking the stake money to £90m or more. It could easily be £100m if the hype is to be believed, generating a record sum for good causes.

After the £10 prizes have been paid out, 32 per cent of the remaining prize pool is added to the jackpot, which is expected to rise to at least £35m, maybe even £40m - even if the stories about the Australian-based International Loto Fund and its Romanian-born mastermind's plan to invest £14m to cover every possible combination of numbers turns out to be pure fiction. Church

leaders can denounce the siren call of the lottery with all their might, but Camelot's own warnings that players should buy their tickets early this week were calculated to inspire even a bigger demand, and certainly got sales off to a very brisk start as soon as shops re-opened last Tuesday.

Perhaps the best hope of preventing lottery fever creating real hardship this week is that addicts will reduce their spending on instant scratch cards, currently running at around £26m a week, in order to finance their dream of mega-riches. Since it started on 19 November 1994 the lottery has now created more than 140 lucky jackpot winners, (as well as, some might say, a lucky lottery regulator).

But Lady Luck continues to defy the statisticians.

After 59 weekly draws each number should have come up a little under nine times including bonus balls. In fact number five has now turned up as a winning number 15 times, including four times as the bonus ball.

Numbers 10 and 28 have come up 13 times. 22 has been drawn 12 times and numbers 30, 44 and 48 have all won 11 times.

At the other end of the scale, number 39 came up last week for the only the second time and that after a losing sequence of 53 weeks, just

in time to forestall the lottery equivalent of a steward's enquiry. It is no surprise to some that the next unluckiest number is 13 with only three winning balls plus one bonus, while 37 has only come up five times, and numbers nine, 12, 24 and 34 have won only six times.

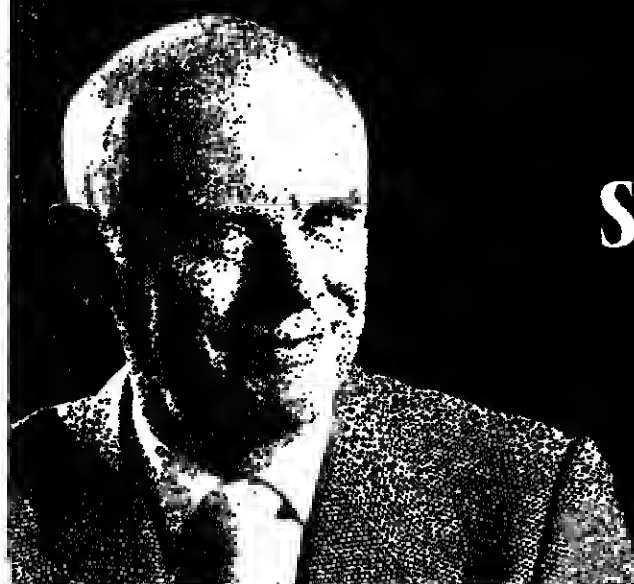
There are also some long losing sequences. Each number should come up every eight weeks or so on average, but it is 32 weeks since 13 came up, and 25 weeks since 31 dropped into the winning slot, while number 38 has not won for 19 weeks now, and 22, which has won 12 times, last did so 18 weeks ago. It is 16 weeks since 41 was a winner, and 15 weeks since 24 appeared.

The last two weeks produced no jackpot winners, perhaps because on both occasions three of the six outright winning balls were numbered 40 and over.

The previous week saw several winners but only one winning ticket, which may well reflect the fact that two consecutive numbers, seven and eight came up.

If there is a lesson to be learned it is that if you choose consecutive numbers or several numbers closely bunched together you may not win very often, but when you do, you should win big. That seems to be the basis behind the tactics of the lottery syndicates like the International Loto Fund.

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Fixed rates						
Hinckley & Rugby	0800 774499	0.50 to 1/1/97	70	£250	Free 3 yrs unemp ins	1st 5 yrs: indiv determined
1st Mortgage Securities	0800 080088	5.75 to 1/1/98	75	£275		To 1/1/00: 6 mths interest
Woolwich BS	0181-298 5000	7.49 to 1/2/01	95	£245	Rentage up to £500 rebate	To 1/2/00: rebate reclaimed & 6 mths interest
Variable rates						
Northern Rock BS	0800 591500	1.19 to 1/3/97	90	-	Refund valuation fee	1st 5 yrs: 5% of sum repaid
Greenwich BS	0181 858 8212	4.99 for 3 years	95	-		1st 5 yrs: discount reclaimed
Abbey National	0800 555100	6.34 to 31/1/01	75	-	Refund valuation fee	To 30/1/01: indiv determined
First time buyers fixed rates						
Bristol & West BS	0800 100117	0.95 to 30/11/96	90	£275		To 30/11/00: 5 mths interest
Market Harborough BS	01858 463244	4.49 to 1/1/98	95	£100	Free unemp insurance	To 1/1/00: 3/1 mths interest
Midland Bank	0800 494999	7.49 to 30/3/01	95	£250	Refund valuation fee	To 30/3/01: 6/3 mths interest
PERSONAL LOANS						
Unsecured						
Direct Line	0141 248 9966	14.9E			Fixed monthly payments (£3,000 over 3 years)	
Midland Bank	0800 180180	15.4			With insurance	£102.59
Abbey National	0345 545556	15.5			Without insurance	£103.14
Secured (second charge)						
Clydesdale Bank	0800 240024	8.6	Max LTV		Advance	£103.26
First Direct	0800 242424	9.7	Neg		£3K - £15K	Terms
Royal Bank of Scotland	Via branch	9.8	80%		£3K to neg	6 mths to 25 years
			70%		£2.5K - £100K	Up to 40 years
OVERDRAFTS						
Woolwich BS						
Telephone	0800 400900	Account	Authorised	APR	Unauthorised	APR
		Current	0.76	9.5	% pm	28.5
Alliance & Leicester BS						
Telephone	0500 959595	Current	0.76	9.5	% pm	28.8
Abbey National						
Telephone	0500 200500	Current	0.79	9.9	% pm	29.5
CREDIT CARDS						
Standard						
Telephone	0800 829024	Card	Min	Rate	APR	Annual
		pm %	%	fee		
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Telephone	0800 829024	MasterCard/Visa	-	-	0.95 G	12.10
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Telephone	0800 829024	MasterCard/Visa	-	-	1.00	14.60
Royal Bank of Scotland						
Telephone	0800 161616	MasterCard	-	1.14	14.50	NB 0
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John Lewis						
Telephone	Via store	Payment by direct debit	APR	% pm	APR	% pm
Marks & Spencer						
Telephone	01244 681681	Via store	1.90 A	25.3	2.00 A	26.8
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Telephone	Via store	Via store	1.94	25.9	2.20	29.8

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TELEPHONE NUMBER	ACCOUNT	NOTICE OR TERM	DEPOSIT	RATE %	INTEREST INTERVAL
INSTANT ACCESS					
Portman BS	01202 252444	Instant Access	Instant	£100	4.80
Teachers BS	0800 378669	Bullion Share	Instant	£500	5.70
Co-operative Bank	0345 252000	Pathfinder	Instant	£5,000	5.62
Skipiton BS	01756 700511	3 High Street	Instant	£30,000	6.50
INSTANT ACCESS POSTAL ACCOUNTS					
Britannia BS	01538 332898	Capital Trust	Postal	£2,000	5.60
B&W Asset	0800 303330	Direct Access	Postal	£5,000	5.75
B&W Asset	0800 303330	Direct Access	Postal	£10,000	5.80
Manchester BS	0161 639 5545	Money by mail	Postal	£25,000	6.25
NOTICE ACCOUNTS & BONDS					
Nottingham BS	0115 948 1444	Postmark	7 day P	£2,500	5.75
Bradford & Bingley BS	0345 248248	Direct 60	60 day P	£15,000	6.50
Chelsea BS	0800 272505	120 Account	120 day	£1,000	6.50
Halifax BS	01422 333333	Special Reserve	1 year bond	£10,000	6.90
MONTHLY INTEREST					
Co-operative Bank	0345 252000	Pathfinder	Instant	£5,000	5.62
Leopold Joseph & Sons	0171 588 2323	40 Day Notice	40 day	£10,000	6.6875
Scarborough BS	0800 590578	Scarborough 50	50 day	£1,000	6.00
Bradford & Bingley BS	0345 248248	Direct 60	60 day P	£15,000	6.30
FIXED RATE BONDS					
West Bromwich BS	0121 525 7070	Guaranteed Growth	31.1.97	£5,000	6.80 F
Sun Banking Corp	01438 744505	Investment Certs	2 yr bond	£1,000	6.60 F
Sun Banking Corp	01438 744505	Investment Certs	3 yr bond	£1,000	6.80 F
Sun Banking Corp	01438 744505	Investment Certs	5 yr bond	£1,000	7.25 F
CHEQUE ACCOUNTS					
Woolwich BS	0800 400900	Current	Instant	£500	3.20
Chelsea BS	0800 717515	Classic Postal	Instant	£2,500	5.00
Alliance & Leicester BS	0116 271 7272	Alliance	Instant	£5,000	5.00
Malmort Benson	01202 502404	Hica	Instant	£2,500	5.75
GUARANTEED RETURN BONDS					
Financial Assurance	0181 490 9157	1 year	£5,000	4.75FN	Year
Financial Assurance	0181 490 9157	2 year	£5,000	5.00FN	Year
Financial Assurance	0181 490 9157	3 year	£5,000	5.20 FN	Year
Premier Life	01444 458721	4 year	£1,000	5.40 FN	Year
Piemonte Insurance	0181207 9007	5 year	£5,000	6.45 FN	Year

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FEAR OF FINANCE Clifford German

Next Wednesday the Norwich Union announces its reversionary bonus rate for 1995, the figure which is added each year to the accumulated value of endowment policies. It will provide the first clues as to whether the 20 per cent rise in share prices last year was enough to end the trend towards shrinking bonuses, which set in at the start of the Nineties.

Those shrinking bonuses set home-owners thinking the unthinkable, that the profits insurance companies generated on their endowment policies might not be enough to pay off the mortgage when it matured, let alone pay the fat surplus which home-owners had been led to expect when they switched their repayment mortgages to endowments by the million in the Eighties. Arguably, it was the sudden realisation that endowment policies might not be sure-fire investments which undermined the housing market.

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SCOTTISH WIDOWS



Television

by Gerard Gilbert

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Call Red 9pm (TV above). Just when you thought they couldn't find yet another variation on <i>Casualty</i> and <i>London's Burning</i> - along comes the helicopter paramedics of this new seven-part drama (5717). Cutting Edge: Car Thieves 9pm C4. On the beat with the Greater Manchester Police Stolen Vehicle Squad (3359). The Brains Trust 11.15pm BBC2. Not a great night for originality, as this old Reithian chestnut is revived. A panel of intellectuals field viewers' questions (558576).	Return to the Dying Rooms 9pm C4. Follow-up to the harrowing documentary about the Chinese state orphanages where abandoned baby girls were left to their chairs or simply left to die (3064). The X Files 10pm BBC1. The FBI paranormal investigators, having clocked up BBC2's headliner figures in years, are nabbed by the senior channel (883828). The Larry Sanders Show 11.15pm BBC2 (above). Garry Shandling's faux-chat show returns. Serious fun (407267).	Della Smith's Winter Collection 8.30pm BBC2. Did you manage a cranberry-free Christmas? Well done. Nevertheless, she's back with an edition titled <i>Scarfies and the Winter Vegetarian</i> (5126). Under the Sun 9.30pm BBC2 (above). There's an acute shortage of wives in Singapore, and the government has opened its own dating agency to help (700855). The Big Idea 11.15pm BBC2. The Independent's Andrew Marr begins a new weekly series of discussions (429107).	French and Saunders 9.30pm BBC1 (above). Should be worth it alone for Dawn's impersonation of Bjork. Patsy Kensit is the guest star (10362). Inside Story 10pm BBC1. Two-year-old Ian Stewart was left brain damaged after an operation - he's in constant pain and isn't expected to make it to his teens. His parents have sacrificed both their careers in order to care for him, and now are coming round to the idea that euthanasia might be the answer (530782).	Sounds of the Eighties 7.30pm BBC2. To accompany Peter Dinklage's tour. First up, the likes of Duran Duran, Wham! and Adam and the Ants. Just dandy (657). Gardening from Scratch 8.30pm BBC2. Mighty useful series - and about time too. Not only calls a spade a spade but tells you what to do with it too (7218). Jo Brand through the Cakehole 10.30pm C4 (above). The comedienne and Independent's first female columnist, spoofing <i>Gladiators</i> and <i>Reservoir Dogs</i> (471299).
From Salford to Jericho 7.45pm R4. Experimental drama mixing Simon Armitage's poetry, interviews with homeless people in Manchester and the story of a woman searching for her missing brother - muddling, but nicely ambitious.	Consequences 7.20pm R4. This week, Tony Travers explores how the Conservative government ever got themselves mixed up in the poll tax, abandoned less than three years after its introduction - however soberly told, still a farcical tale.	On Baby Street 11pm R4. The inescapable Jenny Eclair co-wrote and stars in a comedy drama about three pregnant women living on the same road - nice cast (Graham Fellows, Caroline Hook, Keith Allen), up-and-down script.	Clever Girls and Lost Boys 7.20pm R4. Sarah Dunant looks at the growing vogue for single-sex education, and asks whether it really does have academic benefits for all - or is the dark truth that it's only good for the girls?	Against 10pm R2. 20 years after Christine's death, the 'Radio 2 Arts Programme' sends Claire Rayner to Harrogate (where her disappearance prompted a huge manhunt 70 years ago) to investigate the great woman's contribution to culture.

Sunday Television and Radio

BBC1

- 7.05 *Match of the Day - the Road to Wembley* (S) (7910649).
- 8.15 *Suenos - World Spanish* (4787262).
- 8.30 *Breakfast with Frost.* John Major has a New Year's message (74465).
- 9.30 *The Big Question.* Mark Lawson asks it of management guru Tom Peters (S) (3696910).
- 9.45 *First Light* (S) (813945).
- 10.15 *See Hear!* (S) (732026).
- 11.00 *The 11th Hour* (S) (31991).
- 12.00 *Countryfile* (S) (85295).
- 12.30 *News* (S) (13415378).
- 12.35 *Enchanted Tales* (S) (5639823).
- 1.20 *Cartoon* (S) (73518755).
- 1.30 *EastEnders.* *Ornithus* (S) (5709668).
- 2.55 *Match of the Day Live.* The Road to Wembley. Live coverage of Chelsea vs Newcastle United in the FA Cup third round (S) (2121823).
- 5.15 *Black Hearts in Battersea* (S) (37668).
- 5.45 *News: Weather* (850755).
- 6.05 *Regional News* (539823).
- 6.10 *Songs of Praise.* From Leeds Town Hall (S) (809910).
- 6.45 *Antiques Roadshow.* Valuations from Dover, including a painting by Walter Sickert and German invasion plans for England (S) (220129).
- 7.30 *Ple in the Sky.* An accident during a pheasant shoot is investigated by our restaurant-sleuth (S) (474641).
- 8.20 *As Time Goes By.* Judi Dench and Geoffrey Palmer are both admirable actors, and Bob Larbey's script is one of the most decent on TV. Then why does this sitcom fail to even tickle the corn of the mouth? Anyway, a new series (S) (881858).
- 8.50 *News: Weather* (758736).
- 9.05 *The Gulf War.* The war that was just made for our TV screens is remembered in a four-part series. See *Preview*, p28 (241200).
- 10.05 *Truly, Madly, Deeply* (Anthony Minghella 1991 UK). *Memorably*, if a tad unfairly, dispatched to Room 101 by Ian Hislop (all those actors north-London types nosediving around the South Bank), there is still much to enjoy about Minghella's romantic comedy starring Alan Rickman and Juliet Stevenson (S) (676823).
- 11.50 *Broadway Boulevard* (Paul Bogart 1992 US). You've maybe seen *Brighton Beach Memoirs* or *Divine Blues*, so you'll maybe know the score as Neil Simon's autobiographical trilogy reaches its final point, with the brothers (Cory Parker and Jonathan Silverman) well on their way to literary success (S) (632668).
- 1.20 *The Sky at Night.* Orion (S) (2351359).
- 1.40 *Weather* (2427175). To 1.45am.

BBC2

- 7.30 *Children's BBC.* Rupert. 7.35 *The Adventures of Skippy.* 8.00 *Playdays.* 8.20 *Felix the Cat.* 8.35 *Jackanory.* 8.50 *Bitsa.* 9.10 *Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles.* 9.30 *Phantom 2040.* 10.00 *Travel Bug.* 10.25 *Grange Hill.* 10.50 *Agent Z and the Penguin from Mars.* 11.15 *As Seen on TV.*
- 11.45 *Star Trek (R)* (1811281).
- 12.35 *Fantasy Football League.* Re-run laddery from last Friday, with guest managers Nick Owen and referee Clive Thomas (S) (6877381).
- 1.05 *Singled Out.* New (to this country anyway) dating game from America. *Blind Date* variants look like selling well in 1996 (S) (32215533).
- 1.30 *Wildlife on Two.* Semi-seasonal look at the lot of the robin (R) (30129).
- 2.00 *Ambie Mame* (Morton DaCosta 1958 US). Not to be confused with the dismal, so-bad-it's-good remake with Lucille Ball, Rosalind Russell plays the unconventional relative tutoring young Roger Smith in the ways of fine living. Forrest Tucker and Coral Browne co-star (7674262).
- 4.20 *Ski Sunday.* The men's slalom from Flachau, Austria (1570668).
- 4.55 *Rugby Special.* Highlights of Bath vs Leicester (S) (1655303).
- 5.55 *1996 World Professional Darts Championship.* Dougie Donnelly introduces live coverage of the final of the Embassy World Professional Championship from Surrey (Subsequent programmes subject to change) (S) (97578939).
- 8.10 *The Tourist.* These days, if you want to savour the peace and solitude enjoyed by the Romantic poets and early Victorians in the Lake District, it's possible you'd have to travel to the Gobi Altai region of south-west Mongolia. This new series - filmed over an entire tourist season in four continents - explores the history and impact of mass tourism. See *Preview*, p28 (747754).
- 9.00 *The 1996 London International Boat Show.* Steve Rider and Sally Taylor report (S) (7804).
- 10.00 *Trespass* (Walter Hill 1992 US). Firemen Bill Paxton and William Sadler discover a map which suggests gold may be buried in a disused warehouse. Inevitably - this being Walter Hill - the warehouse is now occupied by a local neighbourhood drugs gang led by rapper Ice T. Avoid (S) (116026).
- 11.40 *House of Games* (David Mamet 1987 US). Mamet's cool psychological thriller in which popular psychology writer Lindsay Croise finds herself obsessed with the world of con artist Joe Mantegna (S) (324853). To 1.20am.
- 2.00 *The Learning Zone.* To 5.00am.
- REGIONS. Wales: 4.55pm *Scrum 5.* Ntl: 1.30pm *You're Talking.* 1.55 *Our Roving Reporter.*

ITV/London

- 6.00 *GMTV.* 6.00 *The Sunday Programme.* 6.30 *News and Sport.* 7.00 *The Sunday Programme* (90991).
- 8.00 *Disney Club.* With *Hollyoaks* stars Paul Leyson and Julie Buckfield and singer Betty McLean (S) (3579668).
- 10.15 *Link.* How Irish disabled people are fighting for equal rights (S) (7782129).
- 10.30 *Sunday Matters.* Including 11.00 *Morning Worship* from St John the Baptist, Trowbridge, Wiltshire (S) (85842).
- 12.30 *The Munsters Today* (S) (6884571).
- 12.55 *Local News* (4360823).
- 1.00 *News.* Weather (2836552).
- 1.10 *European Club Rugby - the Heineken Cup.* Alastair Hignell presents live coverage of the final of the Heineken European Cup from the national stadium, Cardiff. Top club sides from France, Ireland, Italy and Wales are involved, and the kick-off is at 1.30pm (7774571).
- 3.15 *Liverpool Victoria Charity Challenge.* 16 of the world's top snooker players compete for charity (S) (64360991).
- 5.40 *London Tonight* (846552).
- 6.10 *Robin Hood* (John Irvin 1991 US). John McGuffin-scripted version of the legend, which popped into cinemas just before the Kevin Costner blockbuster, with Patrick Bergin as Robin and Uma Thurman as the kind of Maid Marian you'd wear tattered Lincoln Green for (S) (38117002).
- 8.00 *A Touch of Frost.* David Jason's dark copper returns, kept busy by a notorious kidnapper (S) (89101).
- 10.10 *Lights, Camera, Action: A Century of the Cinema.* Michael Aspel fronts a six-part series of 100 years of the cinema, beginning with a look at stardom, and talking to a host of stars old and new (S) (6045).
- 11.00 *News.* Weather (281858).
- 11.15 *Liverpool Victoria Charity Challenge.* Snooker (S) (842262).
- 12.15 *Between Two Brothers* (Robert M Lewis 1982 US). A tale of two brothers: one whose career as an attorney has led him into the race for Congress, while the other brother struggles to keep alive his father's painting business (874752).
- 2.05 *Cue the Music.* The Band (6290663).
- 3.05 *Hot Money* (Selig Usher 1979 Can). Orson Welles rather oddly crops up in this drab Canadian heist movie. Little else to be said for it really (7564576).
- 4.35 *Marquee Anniversary.* The 25th anniversary of London's Marquee Club celebrated (S) (2837682). To 5.30am.

Channel 4

- 6.20 *Biff!* (R) (8998533).
- 7.15 *Take 5.* With *The Magic Roundabout*, *Bush Tails*, *Natalie*, *Ivor the Engine* and *Joggy Bear* (24804).
- 7.45 *The Magic School Bus.* New American animation featuring the voice of Lily Tomlin (S) (29303).
- 8.15 *Hong Kong Phooey* (4703200).
- 8.30 *Stunt Dawgs* (9943552).
- 8.55 *Biker Mice from Mars* (S) (9035587).
- 9.20 *The Secret World of Alex Mack* (5447533).
- 9.50 *Earthworm Jim* (S) (1019736).
- 10.15 *Saved by the Bell* (1832465).
- 10.40 *Rocky's Modern Life* (S) (4362991).
- 11.15 *Rawhide* (774262).
- 12.15 *Mission Impossible.* A hostile regime is attempting to kill millions of Americans using germ warfare (395200).
- 1.15 *Football Italia.* Roma vs Fiorentina (63682397).
- 3.30 *The Lineament.* Short film about the art of the lineament (2285007).
- 3.45 *The Big Trees* (Felix Faist 1952 US). As titles go, outside the odd Donga settlement, not one to draw the crowds. Actually, given we're talking the 1950s here, the message is strongly environmental - as scheming logger Kirk Douglas tries to separate a colony of Quakers from a plantation of Giant Redwoods he wants to turn into coffee tables. Douglas did this one for free. In order to get out of his Warner's contract. It kind of shows (293397).
- 5.30 *Hollyoaks.* Last Monday's slice of rather wishful Chester teenaged (R) (S) (246).
- 6.00 *The Persuaders.* Lord Great lifts an eyebrow as he receives death threats during a car race (34945).
- 7.00 *Time Team.* Tony Robinson and his less celebrated fellow enthusiasts get their hands on some maps of a Cornish antiquarian who ended his days in a local lunatic asylum. If he wasn't completely bonkers, the maps should show the way to a 2,000-year-old Iron Age underground chamber. Exciting stuff (S) (9216).
- 8.00 *Avanti!* (Billy Wilder 1972 US). One of Wilder's later and, as such, neglected comedies stars Jack Lemmon as an uptight American who arrives on Ischia to claim his father's body, finds that he has died with his mistress and becomes involved with the mistress's daughter, Juliet Mills. Long and packed with detailed character acting from the likes of Olive Reilly and Edward Andrews, this is an unexpected pleasure (59036804).
- 10.45 *American Football: The Road to Superbowl.* It's down to the last eight (S) (219465).
- 12.45 *Bansaat Ki Raat* (PL Santoshi 1960 India). The path of true romance is studded with song and dance in this version of the popular Hindi story (90080717). To 3.25am.

ITV/Regions

- Wales:** As London except. 12.30pm *Central Newsweek* (6884571). 12.55 *Central News and Weather* (84369823). 2.55 *Our House* (7830397). 5.55 *Central News and Weather* (889755). 7.00am *Cue the Music* (23599). 3.00am *ITV Sport Centre* (44541). 3.30am *Johnnie* (475059). 5.20-5.30am *Asian Eye* (307402).
- Yorkshire:** As London except. 12.25pm *Challenger of the Seas* (847007). 12.55 *West Region News* (636823). Wales: *News* (4360823). *Wales European Rugby - The Heineken Cup* (7774571). 3.15 *Phil: The Ambiguity Capital Hero* (303199). 5.05 *Mentor* (S) (977220). 5.55 *West Region News* (889755). *Wales: News* (889755). 11.15 *Phoenix* (842262). 12.15am *Phil: The Ambiguity Capital Hero* (303199). 12.30am *ITV Sport Centre* (44541). 3.30am *Johnnie* (475059). 5.20-5.30am *Asian Eye* (307402).
- West Midlands:** As London except. 12.30pm *Cartoon Time* (8997376). 12.55 *Meridian News and Weather* (13418194). 5.25 *The 1995 Footballer of the Year* (636823). 5.55 *Meridian News and Weather* (889755). 7.00am *Cue the Music* (23599). 3.00am *ITV Sport Centre* (44541). 3.30am *Johnnie* (475059). 5.20-5.30am *Asian Eye* (307402).
- West of Scotland:** As London except. 12.30pm *West of Scotland News* (6884571). 12.55 *West of Scotland News* (636823). 3.15 *Phil: The Ambiguity Capital Hero* (303199). 5.05 *Mentor* (S) (977220). 5.55 *West of Scotland News* (889755). 11.15 *Phoenix* (842262). 12.15am *Phil: The Ambiguity Capital Hero* (303199). 12.30am *ITV Sport Centre* (44541). 3.30am *Johnnie* (475059). 5.20-5.30am *Asian Eye* (307402).
- South:** As London except. 12.30pm *Cartoon Time* (8997376). 12.55 *South News* (636823). 3.15 *Phil: The Ambiguity Capital Hero* (303199). 5.05 *Mentor* (S) (977220). 5.55 *South News* (889755). 11.15 *Phoenix* (842262). 12.15am *Phil: The Ambiguity Capital Hero* (303199). 12.30am *ITV Sport Centre* (44541). 3.30am *Johnnie* (475059). 5.20-5.30am *Asian Eye* (307402).
- East:** As London except. 12.30pm *Cartoon Time* (8997376). 12.55 *East News* (636823). 3.15 *Phil: The Ambiguity Capital Hero* (303199). 5.05 *Mentor* (S) (977220). 5.55 *East News* (889755). 11.15 *Phoenix* (842262). 12.15am *Phil: The Ambiguity Capital Hero* (303199). 12.30am *ITV Sport Centre* (44541). 3.30am *Johnnie* (475059). 5.20-5.30am *Asian Eye* (307402).
- North:** As London except. 12.30pm *Cartoon Time* (8997376). 12.55 *North News* (636823). 3.15 *Phil: The Ambiguity Capital Hero* (303199). 5.05 *Mentor* (S) (977220). 5.55 *North News* (889755). 11.15 *Phoenix* (842262). 12.15am *Phil: The Ambiguity Capital Hero* (303199). 12.30am *ITV Sport Centre* (44541). 3.30am *Johnnie* (475059). 5.20-5.30am *Asian Eye* (307402).

Radio

- Radio 1**
87.5-91.9MHz FM
7.00am Kevin Greening 10.00
Drive 2.00 Soul on Sunday
4.00 UK Top 40 7.00 Signs of the Times
10.00 Andy Kershaw 12.00 Mark Tonderai 4.00-6.30am Chris Warren
- Radio 2**
88-90.2MHz FM
7.00am Don Maclean 9.05
Michael Aspel 10.30 Hayes on
Sunday 12.00 Desmond Carrington
2.00 Benny Green 3.00 David
4.00 Chris Stuart's Piano
5.00 Sunday Songbook 7.00
Nanette Newman 8.30 Sunday Hall
Hour 9.00 Alan Keate 10.00 Other
People's Lives 12.05 Steve Madden
3.00-6.00am Alex Lester
- Radio 3**
92.8-94.2MHz FM
6.35am Open University
7.00 Sacred and Profane.
8.55 Choice of Three.
9.00 Brian Kay's Sunday Morning.
12.15 Music Matters.
1.00 News. From the Proms 1995.
2.25 Spirit of the Age. Christopher
Pegge evokes the sights and
sounds of the medieval land-
scape of the Isle of Ely.
3.25 A Series of Intervals. Adrian
Jack relates to the major 2nd.
3.35 Schubert. Richard Stokes intro-
duces settings of poetry by Schu-
bert's friends and contemporaries,
performed by Robert Holl (bass-
baritone) and Andreas Schiff (piano).
5.45 The Sunday Feature. Chris-
topher Cook presents a critical history
of British ballet.
6.30 Missa Pro Defunctis. The
Cantata Hispanica perform a
17th-century mass written by
Joan Carles in memory of those
who died in the Reapers' war be-
tween Spain and Catalonia.
7.30 The Sunday Play: *The Real
Don Juan*. Jose Zorrilla's version
of this classic tale in a transla-
tion by Renée Bock. With Gerard
Murphy and Paul Gavan.
9.15 Choir Works. Brian Wright in-
troduces Russian music with
roots in the liturgy and life of the
Middle Ages.
11.15-12.30am Record Review.
- Radio 4**
92.4-94.2MHz FM, 182-184 FM
6.00am News Briefing.
6.10 Something Understood.
6.55 Weather.
7.00 News.
7.10 Sunday Papers.



Choice

Sir Charles Powell (left) goes in search of the National Interest (6.30pm R4), starting with General Colin Powell on where he sees the United States in the new world order. The European Union Youth Orchestra open a run of concerts from the Proms 1995 (1pm R3) with Strauss and Stravinsky.

explores some of the incidents and personalities that have shaped the game of cricket.
1.15 In Committee.
1.15 Seeds of Faith. (1/3).
1.20 News.
12.30 The Late Story: The Chi-
ropodist by Ivy Bannister.
12.48 Shipping Forecast.
1.00 As World Service.

Radio 5
(93.8-95.2MHz FM)
6.00am Straight Up 6.30 Brian
Hayes at Breakfast 9.05 Sunday with
Neil 11.55 Special Assignment
12.05 Gary Lineker's Sunday Sport
6.05 Jim and the Doc 7.00 News Ex-
tra 7.35 The Acid Test 8.05 Head to
Head 8.35 Asian Perspective 9.00
Daily Worldview 10.05 Out This
Week 10.35 Crime Desk 11.00 Night
Extra 12.05 Nightbeat 2.00 All
Night 5.00-6.00am Morning Reports

Classic FM
(106.1-107.9MHz FM)
6.00am Sarah Lucas 9.00 Classic
Romance 12.00 Celebrity Choice
1.00 Alan Mann 3.00 Masterclass.
Vivaldi: *Guitar Concerto*. 4.00
Robert Booth 7.00 BookBrowse
8.00 Classic FM Evening Concert.
Purcell: *Trumpet Sonata*. Bach:
Concerto for Two Violins. Purcell:
Suite. The Indian Queen. Vivaldi:
Concerto for Two Violins. Montever-
di: *Il ballo delle ingrate*. 10.00
Howard's Week 12.00 Andre Leon
4.00-6.00am Mark Griffiths

Virgin Radio
(101.5-102.5MHz FM, 105.8-106.8 FM)
6.00am Janey Lee Grace 10.00
Paul Cayte 2.00 Nicky Home 6.00
Mick Johnson 10.00 Gary Davies
2.00-6.00am Robin Banks

World Service
(93.8-95.2MHz FM)
1.00am World News 1.10 Press
Review 1.15 Red Dwarf 1.30 Any-
thing Goes 2.00 Newsday 2.30
Composer of the Month 3.00 World
News 3.15 Sports Roundup 3.30
Jazz for the Asking 4.00 Newsday
4.30 Off the Shelf 5.00 Newsday
5.30 Andy Kershaw

Satellite

SKY ONE
6.00am Hour of Power (6445).
7.00 *London* (887113). 10.00
Ghou-Lashed (41941397). 11.45
The Perfect Family (1694571).
12.00 *Star Trek* (52929). 1.20
The Island (74367). 2.00 *The
Adventures of Brisco County Junior*
(45674). 3.00 *Star Trek: Voyager*
(48246). 4.00 *WWF* (87533).
5.00 *Great Escapes* (3378). 5.30
Mighty Morphin Power Rangers
(991). 6.00 *The Simpsons*
(1804). 7.00 *Beverly Hills 90210*
(5494). 8.00 *Star Trek: Voyager*
(31942). 9.00 *Highlander* (25578).
10.00 *Renegade* (21465). 11.00
Sinfeld (88626). 11.30 *Duckman*
(40129). 12.00 60 Minutes
(82446). 1.00 *Star Trek of London*
(88446). 2.00-6.00pm *Hill Mix*
Long Play (892934).

SKY MOVIES
6.00am *Three Good Things* (1948)
(403007). 8.00 *Battle of Joy* (1956)
(30262). 10.00 *Revenge of the
Nerds* (1994) (77620). 12.00 *Star Trek*
(52929). 1.00 *Star Trek: Voyager*
(48246). 2.00 *The Island* (74367).
3.00 *The Man Who Would Die* (1993)
(18045). 4.00 *Taking Liberty* (1994)
(5945). 6.00 *MacShayne*. Winner
Takes All (1994) (417371). 7.25
Revenge of the Nerds (1994) (417371).
8.00 *Murder One* (19674). 10.00 *The
Patriot* (1993) (46140736).
12.20 *The Movie Show* (4182243).
12.50 *Executive Force* (1993)
(335430). 2.20 *Choices* (1986)
(3166330). 3.50-6.00am *Someone
She Knows* (1994) (7354021).

MOVIE CHANNEL
6.00am *Yogi Bear* and the Magic
Flight of the Spruce Goose (41649).
8.00 *Little Nemo: Adventures in
Slumberland* (1993) (63397). 9.30
Sundays the Great (1956)
(631216). 12.00 *You Must Be Je-
lo* (1965) (44991). 2.00 *The
Happy Thieves* (1962) (16587).
4.00 *Where Are My Children?*
(1994) (84138465). 5.50 *The
Man with the Golden Gun* (1974)
(8020221). 8.00 *Sundays the Great*
(1993) (63397). 10.00 *The Paper*
(1994) (953484). 11.55 *Blood-
suckers* (1993)
(260465). 1.25 *Knightriders*
(1981) (315514). 3.25-6.00am
Starting Area (1994) (33978972).

SKY MOVIES GOLD
12.00pm *Chilly Chilly Bang Bang*
(1968) (8290739). 2.20 *...And
God Created Woman* (1956)
(381026). 4.00 *David and Bathshe-
ba* (1951) (3674). 6.00 *Lower Come*

Back (1961) (16133). 8.00 *Return
from the River Kwai* (1956) (19668).
10.00 *The Thing from Another
World* (1951) (282216). 11.35 *The
Secret War* (1968) (72752).
12.30-3.00am *The Day of a Cham-
bermaid* (1964) (213243).

UK GOLD
7.00am *Give Us a Cue* (8392823).
7.30 *Going for Gold* (9451295).
7.55 *Spring and Autumn*
(573375). 8.20 *And Mother*
Miles (S) (646674). 8.50 *When
the Boat Comes In* (4304007).
9.50 *The Pink Panther* (4376303).
10.10 *Dr Who and the Image of the
Fendahl* (8532768). 12.00 *Doctor
at the Top* (889910). 12.30 *What
a Carry On* (7229842). 1.00 *Carry
on Matron* (8881842). 2.40 *Ken-
ny's Comic Cuts* (4577823). 3.00
The Bill (1463293). 5.20 *Deper-
se* (253113). 6.20 *Some Mothers
Do 'ave 'em* (164659). 7.00 *The
Paul Daniels Magic Show*
(4022649). 8.00 *What a Carry On!*
(2389443). 8.30 *Carry on Don't
Leave Your Heart Behind* (1957859).
10.10 *The Bob Monkhouse Show*
(51888129). 11.15 *Special Branch*
(1225649). 12.20 *Railly Act* of
Ships (4293885). 2.00-7.00am
Shopping at Night (1367373).

SKY SPORTS
7.00am *Cricket* (503129). 10.00
Rugby Union (87370). 12.00 *FA
Cup Third Round* (2190262). 3.30
Cricket (80200). 5.30 *FA Cup Special*
(40533). 7.30 *The Big League*
(73303). 9.30 *Cricket* (10620).
11.30 *Rugby Union* (28552). 1.30-
3



The big picture

A Winter's Tale
Sat 12mdn't BBC2

A Winter's Tale – that's *Conte d'hiver* to you Francophones – is Eric Rohmer's beautiful, pelucid reworking of Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* (just a swift change of article, guys), in which French coiffeuse Charlotte Very (above) meets the love of her life (Frederic van den Driessche) on holiday, but bungles a hasty exchange of addresses. She mooches around in the wintry city, juggling unsatisfactory boyfriends and hoping that her man will return. A sensitive, witty romantic fable.

Television preview

RECOMMENDED VIEWING THIS WEEKEND
by Gerard Gilbert

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Assignment Sat 7.15pm BBC2
Auf Wiedersehen, Pet Sat 9pm C4
Peter York's Eighties Sat 9.30pm BBC2
The Tourist Sun 8.10pm BBC2
The Gulf War Sun 9.05pm BBC1

The scent was first in the air late last year. Loom pants, platform soles and Slade were all safely in the mainstream, and punk had had its fittingly moth-to-the-flame moment of remembrance. There is only one word to describe the state of the millennium catches us all in its headlights: the 1980s and it's our good fortune (and probably no accident) that the whiff was first detected by the refined nostrils of Peter York, and distilled into Peter York's *Eighties* (Set BBCC2). Just imagine. It might have been Eve Pollard, who appears draped adoringly on one of York's bespoken shoulders in the accompanying publicity—or Emma Ridley. Why not? I'm sure light bulbs are going on over at GMTV as we speak.

So, OK, a question. What have Alfred Sherman, The Institute of Economic Affairs, Steve Strange and The Blitz Club got in common? All were pioneers of the 1980s, according to York's thesis – the New Right and the New Romantics, whose individualist creed shaped the decade – and rescued Britain from the “groty Seventies” (Robert Elms) of strikes and bad dress sense.

The Gulf War very much belongs to that uneasy vacuum we call the 1990s. This week marks the fifth anniversary of the opening of Operation Desert Storm, and a whole new vocabulary of warfare: smart bombs and surgical strikes; innocuous megadeath for water-reshaped viewing. *The campaign is remembered* in *The Gulf War* (Sun BBC1), a new four-part series with a self important *World at War* score and from Colin Powell, "Stormin' Norman" Schwarzkopf and King Hussein of Jordan, to Mikhail Gorbachev and Saddam Mubarak and a ripely insane Margaret Thatcher. No surprises that when "Belgrano Margaret" first heard that two Iraqi oil tankers had broken the allies' blockade, she demanded they both be sunk at once. Wiser heads prevailed.

The population of Kuwait is just under one million – the same number of people, as it happens, as were killed in the Hutu genocide in Rwanda in 1994. It's a small African country with no strategic importance and, despite the UN having declared a war-crimes tribunal, justice is dragging its feet. Assignment's film,

"Cursed be Closed Eyes" (Sat BBC2), looks at three individuals trying to make sure those responsible are brought to trial.

The Tourist (Sun BBC2) is a slow, dry documentary series looking at the history of tourism. Once, you might have been able to wander lonely as a cloud over the Lake District, but these days you'd be more likely to be run over by a lycra victim on a mountain bike. Those in search of real virgin lands lump their rucksacks to Gobi Altai in south-west Mongolia.

Briefly back again to the 1980s, and a very different universe to the one stalked by Peter York and fellow style councillors: the second series of *Auf Wiedersehen, Pet* (Sat C4) starts a re-run. It's not quite as good as the first, but this was the best blend of drama and comedy outside of *Coronation Street* — a show it regularly challenged in the ratings. Gary Holtom, who played cockney womanser Wayne, died halfway through filming — although you wouldn't know it by the way scripts and episodes were rejigged. The folk who controlled the images we received of the Gulf War would have been proud of that.



The big match

Chelsea vs Newcastle
Sun 2.55pm BBC1

The big question for Chelsea, as they aim to knock out the Premiership leaders in this third-round FA Cup match, is whether Ruud Gullit will be fit. The Dutch wizard was stretched out during Chelsea's defeat of QPR on New Year's Day, having exacerbated a sciatic nerve problem. But that didn't shut him up. A few days later he was railing about how only three Premiership players were good enough to play in Italy. One of them being Les Ferdinand (above) of Newcastle, this season's joint leading League scorer - who might be itching to put the boot in.

Saturday Television and Radio

BBC 1

7.25 News; Weather (41:54032).
7.30 Children's BBC: SuperTed. 7.35 The Artoix Bunch. 7.50 Izanogod. 8.05 Willy Fog.
8.30 The New Adventures of Superman (R) (S) (8517235).
9.15 Lisa and Kicking. Dale Winton guests (S) (89045166).
12.12 Weather (66012731).
12.15 Grandstand. Introduced by Steve Rider. 12.20 Football Focus. 12.55 Racing from Haydock: 1.00 The New Year Handicap Steeple Chase. 1.10 News. 1.15 Skiing: World Cup action from Flachau, Austria, featuring the men's giant slalom. 1.25 Racing from Haydock: 1.30 The Newton Handicap Hurdle Race. 1.40 Skiing. 1.55 Racing from Haydock: 2.00 The Newton Handicap Steeple Chase. 2.10 Darts: action from the first semi-final of the Embassy World Championship. 2.55 Rugby League: live coverage of Leeds vs Wigan, the second semi-final of the Regal Trophy. 3.45 Football Half-Times 3.55 Rugby League. 4.40 Final Score (54504964).
5.20 News; Weather (3721728). *
5.30 Local News, Weather (570051).
5.35 Dad's Army. An enemy aircraft crash-lands in the local reservoir (588419). *
6.05 Jim Davidson's Generation Game. The Royal Marines find themselves dragoned (S) (953186).
7.00 Neil's House Party. Dale Winton earns a Gotcha (S) (403051).
7.50 The National Lottery Live. £40 million up for grabs, as Cher pushes the button (S) (110273).
8.05 Casualty. The formidable Jane Lapotnik makes a guest appearance as a woman hooked on tranquillizers since the birth of her now grown-up daughter (S) (172490).
8.55 Mel and Sue's Weather (Followed by National Lottery Update) (976186).
9.15 ~~1993~~ The Temp (From Holland 1993 US). After the nanny-hill-hell (*The Hand That Rocks the Cradle*), lodger-from-hell (*Pacific Heights*) comes the temporary-secretary-from-hell, in the shape of Lora Flynn Boyle, and the comparatively feeble tale of a temp killing her way to the top of a cookie firm. Timothy Hutton is the bemused boss (471099).
10.45 Match of the Day - the Road to Wembley. Action from the third round of the FA Cup, with Plymouth Argyle vs Coventry, Tranmere vs QPR and Stoke vs Nottingham Forest (S) (259332).
11.55 The Stand Up Show. Lee Hurst is among the comics (S) (954542).
12.35 ~~1993~~ The Cheap Detective (Robert Moore 1978 US). Predictable spoof - scripted by Neil Simon - of all those much-loved Humphrey Bogart films of the 1940s, with Peter Falk as the eponymous detective (2342620).
1.55 Weather (25285858). To 2.00am.
REGIONS. N1: 2.05 International Cross Country 5.00 Northern Ireland Results.

BBC 2

- 8.20 Open University. Learning Difficulties (8493761).
- 8.45 Nathan the Wise (9059167). 9.10 The Right Course for You? (4678457). 9.35 Voyages of Discovery (5381761).
- 10.00 Nadan Nadia. New comedy drama from Pakistan, starring Babra Shariff (S) (63055896).
- 11.50 Wartime Weddings (4245167).
- 12.00 Circus (451861).
- 2.30 **BIG B** Border Incident (Anthony Mann 1949 US).
- Tough**, exciting and strikingly photographed thriller starring Ricardo Montalban and George Murphy as Mexican and US agents who join forces to smash a ring smuggling illegal immigrants – or “wetbacks” – onto the land of a crooked rancher (91983).
- 2.00 **BIG B** Chameleon (Anthony Mann 1960 US). The second in an Anthony Mann double-bill finds his eye for wide-open spaces severely cramped by MGM's insistence that much of this otherwise sweeping tale of the Oklahoma Land Rush, and its aftermath, be filmed in the studio. Glenn Ford, Maria Schell and Anne Baxter star (66762273).
- 4.25 Darts. Semi-final action at the Embassy World Championship from Frimley Green, Surrey (S) (73077032).
- 6.15 One Man and His Dog. The young handlers take to the field in Cumbria. (S) (7587281). *
- 7.00 News and Sport: Weather (405693). *
- 7.15 Assignment. The story of three courageous individuals who risked their lives to expose the attempted annihilation of Tutsi Rwandans by the Hutu majority in 1994. See *Preview*, above (591780). *
- 8.00 Bookmark. Repeat profile of the author, Rumer Godden, now 88 and living in Scotland. A somewhat turgid version of Godden's *The Peacock Spring* – based on her early life in India – was shown last week (R) (S) (3167). *
- 9.00 Knowing Me, Knowing You... with Alan Partridge. Recycled spoof chat with Steve Coogan, entertaining American singer star Gina Langland and Hot Pants, northern Europe's sexiest dance act (R) (S) (5032). *
- 9.30 Peter York's *Eighties Pioneers*. York kicks off with a look at the New Romantics and the New Right. See *Preview*, above (53693). *
- 10.00 **BIG B** Charlots of Fire (Hugh Hudson 1981 UK). Hudson's Oscar-winning “The British are coming” – Colin Welland) tale of four athletes competing in the 1924 Olympics to a Vangelis beat. With Ben Cross, Ian Charleson, and Nigel Havers (96122).
- 12.00 **BIG B** A Winter's Tale (Eric Rohmer 1992 F). The wonderfully named Charlotte Very plays a *jeune femme* hesitating on the brink of marriage to either a serious librarian or her considerate boss, while unable to forget an idyllic holiday romance that left her with a young daughter in a typical Rohmer conte. See *The Big Picture*, above (S) (55755).

To 2.00am.

ITV/London

- 6.00 GMTV. 6.00 News. Weather. 6.10 Re-Wind. 6.40 Eat Your Veggies. 7.10 Barney and Friends. 7.45-8.55 Saturday Disney. 8.55 VR Troopers (2108896).
- 9.25 **Telecast** **television**. A new, weary behind-the-scenes peek at the world of television and film – yet another opportunity for both mediums to plug themselves (4622438).
- 10.25 **It's Not Just Saturday**. Nolsy new magazine with which to Bray your kids' sensesless while you enjoy a quiet breakfast. The usual mixture of violent games and celebs with something to sell (\$) (4342032).
- 11.30 **The Chart Show (R)** (S) (83964).
- 12.30 **Fantastic**. Cookery for idiots, presented by one Matthew Marsden (S) (69893).
- 1.00 **News**, **Weather** (7362363.1).
- 1.05 **Local News**, **Weather** (73622302). *
- 1.10 **Movies**, **Games and Videos** (32328051).
- 1.40 **Liverpool Victoria Charity Challenge**. 16 of the world's top snooker players compete for charity (S) (9515892).
- 3.50 **Allo! (R)** (220371).
- 4.45 **News**, **Sport**, **Weather** (3748877). *
- 5.05 **London Tonight-Sport** (3383411).
- 5.20 **New Baywatch (S)** (9873070). *
- 6.15 **Gladiators**. The Ashes, No, the Birmingham NEC hasn't burned down taking all the Glads and Ulrika with it. This is a contest between the British and Australian versions of each other (S) (785419). *
- 7.15 **Blind Date** (Including Lottery Result) (S) (707631). *
- 8.15 **Raise the Roof**. A dinky millhouse in Brittany could be someone's (S) (681439). *
- 8.45 **News**, **National Lottery Update**, **Weather** (941490). *
- 9.00 **Jackie Dale's Saturday Night**. Hale and Pace and kid land guest (S) (-426728). *
- 9.45 **60 MIN** **America** (Roger Spotsiswoode 1990 US). US dirty thrills in Laos during the Vietnam War (heroin smuggled out in exchange for the help of local drug barons), played for teenage laughs by lung-ho Mel Gibson and his greenhorn buddy Robert Downey Junior (S) (-425070). *
- 11.45 **Funny Business**. Comedy as the new rock 'n' roll, part 457 (736538).
- 12.15 **Pyjama Party**. Pre-empting C4's *Girlie Show*, former *The Word* presenter Katie Puckridge and a gang of gals host a slumber party (S) (2480026).
- 1.40 **60 MIN** **La Bamba** (Luis Valdez 1987 US). Highly entertaining biopic of Mexican-American crooner Ritchie Valens (an electric Lou Diamond Phillips) who died in the same plane as Buddy Holly (978194).
- 3.30 **God's Gift**. Tacky late-night variant on *Blind Date (R)* (5850378).
- 4.20 **Shift (R)** (5214674).
- 5.10 **Coach (R)** (S) (3915262).
- 5.30 **News** (570261). To 6.00am.

Channel 4

- 5.05 *Sesame Street* (R) (2589693).
- 7.05 *Ulysses 31* (R) (3766693).
- 7.30 *Super Mario Brothers* (R) (53780).
- 8.00 *Trans World Sport* (70631).
- 9.00 *The Morning Line* (S) (72902).
- 10.00 *Blitz!* (59964).
- 11.00 *Gazetta Football* (late) (79728).
- 12.00 *Neighbours. Cutting Edge* documentary about travellers and their on-going battle with Avon Council (R) (47032).
- 1.00 *The Late Late Show* (8471099).
- 1.45 *Channel 4 Racing* from Sandown Park. Including the postponed King George VI Triplemint Chase from Basing Day (2.30pm). John Francome introduces the 1.55 Berring Securities Tolworth Hurdle, 2.30 King George VI Triplemint Chase, 3.00 Anthony Milford's and the 3.35 Hamier Memorial Handicap Chase, and the 3.55 Hamier Novices' Chase Hurdle (65344709).
- 4.00 *The Magic of Bing Crosby*, Louis Armstrong, Rosamery Clooney and the recently late Dean Martin exercise their memories in recycled tribute. Followed by *News Summary and Weather* (R) (8586523).
- 5.05 *Brookside Omnibus* (S) (2397506).
- 6.30 *Right to Reply*, C4's *Beastly Xmas* throws up some argument, and there's a look at the future of interactive TV (761).
- 7.00 *Field Operation Pacific* (George Waggner 1951 '51). Submarine commander John Wayne beats the Japs and wins back the hand of ex-wife Patricia Arf. In drum-beating action. (61709).
- 9.00 *Auf Wiedersehen Pet*. The second series of Dick Clement and Ian Le French's magnificent comedy cranks from the mid-1980s, about a group of British crickies in Germany. See Preview; above 11-23322.
- 10.05 *Father Ted*. Another chance to see the supremely goofy series about house-sharing Irish priests, a recent British Comedy Award-winner (R) (S) (2695823).
- 10.35 *Pin*. Tin Men (Barry Levinson 1987 US). *Levinson's* fond and funny comedy, set in 1960s Baltimore, about feuding aluminium salesman Richard Dreyfuss and Danny DeVito (60481816).
- 12.40 *Late Licence*. Doomed Megalopolis. Manga mayhem: '61581233'.
- 1.30 *Twilight Zone*. A Vietnam veteran is haunted by his memories in an episode directed by William Friedkin (S) (11397).
- 2.00 *Big Girl's Blouse*. Comedy sketches from three of Australia's top women comedians: Magda Szustarska (recently seen in the film *Babe*), Jane Turner (from *Prisoner* *Cell Block H*) and Gina Riley (2595741).
- 2.25 *FYE! Profiles* of Michael Douglas and designer Donna Karen (S) (9612113).
- 2.55 *Beat Specials*. Iggy Pop (R) (S) (7614991). To 3.50am.

ITV/Regions

ASIAN
As London except 12.30pm Movies, Games and Videos (60983). 1.05 *Anglia News* and Weather (73622902). 1.10 *A World of Wonder* (32328051). 5.05 *Anglia News*, Sport and Weather (3383941). 1.45am *American Gladiators* (222674). 2.40am *Film: The Lawyer* (71739303). 4.50am *Music Box Profile* (60376484). 5.00-5.30am *Wanted Dead or Alive* (359545).

THE TIMES/WORKSHIRE
As London except 12.30pm Movies, Games and Videos (60983). 1.05 *Regional News*, Weather (73622902). 1.10 *EastWest US* (1013450). 2.05 *Film: The Thirteenth Crown* After (285148). 5.05 *Regional News*, Weather (3704051). 5.10 *Five Pm* Full Time (4762983). *Notes: Soorline* (4762983). 1.40am *Coach* (222330). 2.35am *War of the Worlds* (7811129). 3.30am *The Crime Hour* (1512092). 4.25am *On the Music* (6151597). 5.20-5.30am *Profile* (3030736).

CENTRAL
As London except 12.30pm Heartland (60983). 1.05 *Central News* and Weather (73622902). 3.50 *Paradise* (2220371). 5.05 *Central News* and Weather (3704051). 5.10 *Caribbean Time* (4762983). 4.20am *Johnnie D* (795649). 5.20-5.30am *Asian Eye* (3030736).

ITV
As London except 12.30pm *Callisto Of Bess* (60983). 1.05 *Regional News*, Weather (73622902). 1.10 *Hawaiian Terrian* *Tranition* 1995 (1013450). 1.50 *Movies*, Games and Videos (49726098). 2.35 *Caribbean Time* (4762983). 2.45 *Film: In Paradise* (7811129). 3.30am *The Crime Hour* (1512092). 4.25am *On the Music* (6151597). 5.05 *Regional News*, Weather (380341). 1.45am *American Gladiators* (222674). 2.40am *Film: The Lawyer* (71739303). 5.00-5.30am *Wanted Dead or Alive* (359545).

MEDIANIM
As London except 12.30pm Movies, Games and Videos (60983). 1.05 *Meridian News* and Weather (73622902). 1.10 *The Big Fly* (32328051). 5.05 *Meridian News* and Weather (3704051). 1.45am *American Gladiators* (222674). 2.40am *Film: The Lawyer* (71739303). 4.50am *Music Box Profile* (60376484). 5.00-5.30am *Freecore* (359545).

WESTCOUNTRY
As London except 12.30pm Movies, Games and Videos (60983). 1.05 *Westcountry News* (73622902). 1.10 *Film: Dreams of Gold: The Mid Fishery* (325176196). 2.55 *Animat* (5647198). 5.05 *Westcountry News* (380341). 1.45am *American Gladiators* (222674). 2.40am *Film: The Lawyer* (71739303). 4.50am *Music Box Profile* (60376484). 5.00-5.30am *Wanted Dead or Alive* (359545).

SBC
As C4 except 11.00am *The Persuaders* (79728). 12.00 *Living Memory* (20254). 12.30pm *Exo Squad* (68325). 1.45 *Channel 4 Racing* (9514779). 4.00 *Equinox* (8856525). 6.30 *Hollyhocks* (761). 7.00 *News* (497061). 7.15 *A* 5.55 (057827). 8.00 *News* (88311). 8.15 *News* (336362). 9.15 *Car Wars* (506172). 9.30 *Stanley Baxter* (3047). 9.45 *News* (88311). 10.00 *News* (336362). 10.15 *Car Wars* (506172). 10.30 *Stanley Baxter* (3047). 10.45 *News* (88311). 11.00 *News* (336362). 11.15 *Car Wars* (506172). 11.30 *Stanley Baxter* (3047). 11.45 *News* (88311). 12.00 *News* (336362). 12.15 *Car Wars* (506172). 12.30 *Stanley Baxter* (3047). 12.45 *News* (88311). 1.00 *News* (336362). 1.15 *Car Wars* (506172). 1.30 *Stanley Baxter* (3047). 1.45 *News* (88311). 1.55 *Car Wars* (506172). 2.00 *News* (336362). 2.15 *Car Wars* (506172). 2.30 *Stanley Baxter* (3047). 2.45 *News* (88311). 2.55 *Car Wars* (506172). 3.00 *News* (336362). 3.15 *Car Wars* (506172). 3.30 *Stanley Baxter* (3047). 3.45 *News* (88311). 3.55 *Car Wars* (506172). 4.00 *News* (336362). 4.15 *Car Wars* (506172). 4.30 *Stanley Baxter* (3047). 4.45 *News* (88311). 4.55 *Car Wars* (506172). 5.00 *News* (336362). 5.15 *Car Wars* (506172). 5.30 *Stanley Baxter* (3047). 5.45 *News* (88311). 5.55 *Car Wars* (506172). 6.00 *News* (336362). 6.15 *Car Wars* (506172). 6.30 *Stanley Baxter* (3047). 6.45 *News* (88311). 6.55 *Car Wars* (506172). 7.00 *News* (336362). 7.15 *Car Wars* (506172). 7.30 *Stanley Baxter* (3047). 7.45 *News* (88311). 7.55 *Car Wars* (506172). 8.00 *News* (336362). 8.15 *Car Wars* (506172). 8.30 *Stanley Baxter* (3047). 8.45 *News* (88311). 8.55 *Car Wars* (506172). 9.00 *News* (336362). 9.15 *Car Wars* (506172). 9.30 *Stanley Baxter* (3047). 9.45 *News* (88311). 9.55 *Car Wars* (506172). 10.00 *News* (336362). 10.15 *Car Wars* (506172). 10.30 *Stanley Baxter* (3047). 10.45 *News* (88311). 10.55 *Car Wars* (506172). 11.00 *News* (336362). 11.15 *Car Wars* (506172). 11.30 *Stanley Baxter* (3047). 11.45 *News* (88311). 11.55 *Car Wars* (506172). 12.00 *News* (336362). 12.15 *Car Wars* (506172). 12.30 *Stanley Baxter* (3047). 12.45 *News* (88311). 12.55 *Car Wars* (506172). 1.00 *News* (336362). 1.15 *Car Wars* (506172). 1.30 *Stanley Baxter* (3047). 1.45 *News* (88311). 1.55 *Car Wars* (506172). 2.00 *News* (336362). 2.15 *Car Wars* (506172). 2.30 *Stanley Baxter* (3047). 2.45 *News* (88311). 2.55 *Car Wars* (506172). 3.00 *News* (336362). 3.15 *Car Wars* (506172). 3.30 *Stanley Baxter* (3047). 3.45 *News* (88311). 3.55 *Car Wars* (506172). 4.00 *News* (336362). 4.15 *Car Wars* (506172). 4.30 *Stanley Baxter* (3047). 4.45 *News* (88311). 4.55 *Car Wars* (506172). 5.00 *News* (336362). 5.15 *Car Wars* (506172). 5.30 *Stanley Baxter* (3047). 5.45 *News* (88311). 5.55 *Car Wars* (506172). 6.00 *News* (336362). 6.15 *Car Wars* (506172). 6.30 *Stanley Baxter* (3047). 6.45 *News* (88311). 6.55 *Car Wars* (506172). 7.00 *News* (336362). 7.15 *Car Wars* (506172). 7.30 *Stanley Baxter* (3047). 7.45 *News* (88311). 7.55 *Car Wars* (506172). 8.00 *News* (336362). 8.15 *Car Wars* (506172). 8.30 *Stanley Baxter* (3047). 8.45 *News* (88311). 8.55 *Car Wars* (506172). 9.00 *News* (336362). 9.15 *Car Wars* (506172). 9.30 <

Radio

Radio 1
6.15am BBC News
7.00am Kevin Greening 10.00
Dave Pearce 12.30 John Peel
2.30 Jo Whalley 5.00 Garry Baker
7.00am Ramping 9.00 Radio
1 Rap Show 12.00 Essential Mix
2.00 Zone Nightingale's Chill Out
Zone 4.00-7.00am Lynn Parsons

Radio 2
(8.30-9.25 AM)
6.00am Mo Dutta 8.05 Brian
Matthew 10.00 Judo Brothers 12.00
Hazel & Saturday Live's Concert
at Oglethorpe 2.00 Martin Kerley
4.00 Nick Barraclough 5.00 Mary
Black In Concert 6.00 Reading
Music 7.00 Classics Today
8.00 The Monsoon Sailing Year!
9.30 David Collier 10.00
Chant David 12.05 Charles New
4.00-7.00am Mo Dutta

Radio 3
6.01-7.01 AM BBC
9.00am Record Review
9.00 Building a Library
10.15 Record Release, Scarlatt:
Sonatas: in 0 minor; in G; in
A; in C minor; Dusselt: Fantasy
and Fugue in F minor;
Chopin: Piano Concerto No 2
in F minor.
11.15 Reissus Beethoven: Violin
Sonata, Op. 5, Op 30 No 3
12.00 Private Press: The
founder of the Samaritans, the
Rev Dr Chad Varah, in conver-
sation with Michael Berkeley.
1.00-1.15; Layer by Layer, Ar-
chaicology: Andrew Jones sits
through the evidence at Dart-
ington Hall, Devon.
2.25 The BBC Orchestra, BBC
Symphony No 2, conducted by
Ira/Maryn Brabbins, Tubin:
Oublé Bass Concerto.
Shostakovich, Symphony No 5.
2.30-2.45; The Tribes of the
Savannah, Dessy: Prelude, These
Uddes. Liszt: Jeux d'eau à la
ville d'Este. Salade No 2 in 8
minor. Wagner, an Lisc.
Wagner, an Lisc. Liszt: The
Waltz No 1. Schubert, an
Lisc.: Erlking.
4.00 The BBC Orchestra, BBC
Symphony No 2, conducted by
Wales/George Hurst. Wagner:
Prelude to Act 1. Brahms:
Symphony No 2 in 0.
5.00-5.15 Record Requests.
5.45 Music Matters.
6.30 Live from the Met. Puccini:
La Bohème. Barbara Pittori (so-
prano), Marcello Giordano
(tenor), Chorus and Orchestra of
the Metropolitan Opera. New
York/Cd: Rca, Acts 1 and 2.



Choice

Simon Heffer pursues the reasons why 16 years of cutbacks and privatisation haven't done anything to reduce Government expenditure to less than 40 percent of GDP, in Agenda (11am R4). Meanwhile, Harry Enfield (left) chases after Alec Guinness, playing multiple roles in a new version of Kind Hearts and Coronets (2.30pm R4).

- 1.00 (FM) *My Questions?* John Humphrys' guests are Robin Cook MP, Lady Howe, Chair of the Broadcasting Standards Commission, Sir Charles Powell, former adviser to Margaret Thatcher, and Judge Stephen Timmins. *Atsah Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons.*
- 1.55 Shipping Forecast.
- 2.00 News. *Any Answers?*
- 2.50 (FM) *Set Match Special.*
- 2.50 (LW) *Saturday Playhouse.* *Kind Heart and Coronet.* *Richard Herfield* taking on *Alec Guinness's* famous turn as the members of the d'Ascoyne family. *See Choice.*
- 3.00 *Strong Impressions.* *Star Roy Strong* visits *Dave (5/6).*
- 4.30 *Science Now.*
- 5.00 *Science Sessions.* *Peter Jay* looks at what went wrong with *Chunnel.* *Tunnels, 11/4.*
- 5.40 *Queenan Country.*
- 5.50 Shipping Forecast.
- 5.55 Weather.
- 6.00 *6 O'Clock News.*
- 6.25 *Week Ending.*
- 6.50 *Ad Lib.*
- 7.20 *Kaleidoscope Feature.* *Brian Sibley* looks at the nation of the *weekday-weekend cycle.*
- 7.50 *Saturday Night Theatre.* *Conan Doyle's Strangest Case.* *Outsized drama by Tony Munday* which tells the true story of *Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's* obsession with a *misarrange of justice.* With *Peter Jeffrey.*
- 9.20 *News in mind.*
- 9.50 *Ten to Ten.*
- 9.55 Weather.
- 10.00 News.
- 10.10 *Amazons on Stage.* *Simon Armitage* introduces *Rita Dove*, the *American Poet Laureate* from *1993 to 1995,* reading at the *1996 New Year of the Poets.* (28).
- 10.45 *Philosophy Figures.* *Dominic Diamond* turns to *Professor John Cottingham,* or *Sarah Patterson,* *Professor Jonathan Renshaw* and *actor Nicky Katt* for some assistance in deciphering the *Ideas of Rene*

Descartes. (2/4).

11.00 Personal Records. Jeremy Nicholas visits the home of actor Robert Hardy in search of musical and personal revelations.

11.30 A Journey. In Edith Wharton's tale, dramatised by Stanley Richardson, a young New Yorker has to make a difficult decision when her ailing husband asks her to during their train journey home, with Karen White and Jim Mulltar.

12.00 News.

12.30 The Late Story: It Could Be You by JK Brannan.

12.45 The Morning Forecast.

1.00am As World Service.

Radio 5

6.03m 99.9fm

6.59am Drive Jackie 6.30 Brian Kennedy 6.59-7.00 Weekend with Kershaw and Whittaker

11.05 Top Gear 11.35 Chris Clark 12.00 Midday Sport

12.15 Sportscafe 1.05 Sport on 5

1.45 The Big Questions 7.15 Straight Up 8.05 The Box 8.35 Delyn on Saturday 10.05 The Treatment 11.00 Night Extra 12.05 After Hours 2.00 Up All Night 5.00-6.05am Morning Reports

Classic FM

10.00 81.1MHz FM

6.00am Sarah Lucas 6.00 Classical 12.00 Classical

Classical Gardening 7.00 Alan Mann 3.00 The Saturday Alternative 6.00 Classical America 7.00 The World Opera Session, Verdi, Rigolotto, Roberto Alagna, Renato Bruson, Chorus and Orchestra of La Scala, Milan/Riccardo Muti.

8.00am The Choir 12.00 On 2.00 Leonard 4.00 Classical Countdown

5.00-6.00am Alan Macfarlane

Virgin Radio

0715 1971-1969m NW 105.6MHz FM

6.00am Janey Lee Grace 10.00 Richard Skinner 2.00 Mark Forrester 6.00 Mitch Carson 10.00 The Virgin Hour 10.00-5.00am Howard Pearce

World Service

1584KHz LW

1.00am View News 1.10 Press Review 1.15 The Traditions of the Prophet 1.30 From Our Own Correspondents 1.45 News 2.00 Sports Roundup 2.30 The Ed Stewart Show 3.00 World News 3.15 Sports Roundup 3.30 Foreign Estate 3.45 School News 3.50 News 4.00 4.15 World News 4.30 Seeing Stars 4.45 The World in Your Ear 5.00 News 5.30 In Praise of God

Satellite

SKY ONE
7.00am Undercover (6959552), 7.00
Ghouls-Lashed (1/04/74525), 11.45
The Perfect Family (1/707059), 12.00
WWF (695958), 1.00 The Hit Men
1.30 The Hit Men Tech (695958), 2.30
Family Ties (9092), 3.00 West
Weekend (13525), 4.00 Kung Fu, the
Legend Continues (92032), 5.00 The
Young Indiana Jones Chronicles
(3612), 6.00 WWF (695822), 7.00
The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles
(46341), 8.00 Gyps (21544), 9.30
The Serial Killers (136457), 10.00 Sa
aturday Night, Sunday Morning (5176,
10.30 Revelations (77799), 11.00
The Movie Show (93761), 11.30 For
the Love of Money (140651), 11.50 Ar
cane (100549), 1.00 Saturday
Night Live (43269), 2.00 6.00am H
Mix Long Play (6938262).


SKY MOVIES
6.00am Madame X (1937), 85806
8.00 Dodge City (1939) (78525),
10.00 Hot Shots! Part Deux (1993)
(99419), 12.00 Samurai Choux
1993 (68148), 3.00 A Child's Cr
y (1982), 4.00 The 13th Warrior
1981 (1981) (2510254), 6.00 Wid
ow's Peak (1994), Comedy-drama
starring Miki Farrow and Jon
Powell (70789), 8.00 Hot Shots
Part Deux (1993), 10.00 The
starring Charlie Sheen and Lloyd
Bridges (42526), 10.00 The Crow
(1994), Thriller starring Brandon Lee
and Ernie Hudson (101235), 11.45
The Untouchables (1992), 12.00
1.15 The Crow (1994) (246587),
2.55 Johnny Be Good (1988)
(886755), 4.25-6.00am A Child's
Cr for Help (1994) (94712).

MOVIE CHANNEL
6.00am The Gelfin Boy (1958)
6.00 Gulfstream (1988)
(76157), 10.00 Scooby-Doo Meets
the Boo Brothers (180761), 12.00
September After (1950) (69490),
1.00 The Untouchables (1992), 1.15
4.00 Batman: Mask of the Phantoms
(1993) (6186), 6.00 My Family The
1993 (1993), Children's comedy-sta
ring the cast of the 1993 film
8.00 Scam (1992), Thriller starring
Christopher Walken and Lorraine
Bracco (401167), 10.00 Deep Red
(1965), 11.00 The Untouchables
1993 (1993), 1.05 The Untouchables
1993 (1993) (21465), 2.40 One
Woman's Courage (1993) (622549), 4.00
1.45-6.00am Batman: Mask of the
Phantom (1993) (198823).

SKY MOVIES GOLD
4.00am Legends of the Round Table
(1953) (55061), 6.00 Starline Table

[illegible]

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A nation sings: Luck be a lady tonight

Having a ticket for tonight's National Lottery has become almost irresistible. To miss out is to be worthy but boring—the only wallflower at a party. Deep down, everyone knows that afterwards they will feel deflated, let down, perhaps even disappointed with themselves. Yet that has not prevented mass seduction.

This week, those who fulminate against the lottery have been vanquished, at least temporarily, by a wave of fascination with tonight's draw. A few even admit their own hypocrisy. Many disagree with huge pay-outs, hate the fat cats at Camelot and worry about gambling addiction. But with a £40m jackpot at stake, they, too, have been down at the newsagents picking their numbers.

What has happened? In part we all seem to have been swept up by the hysteria of today's event. The lottery is the main topic of conversation. On television was the great cultural unifier: on any evening you could watch a programme and next day everyone would be discussing it. But the multiplication of channels has changed all that just at a time when the fragmentation of society makes more important the creation of common culture. Today, the one activity almost everyone seems to engage in—and we are all able to talk about—is the lottery. No one wants to be left out. A £1 bet secures a chance to discuss the national obsession: getting very, very rich without doing a tap of work.

But there is more to the phenomenon than this. The lottery dream always had wide-

spread appeal across all classes. Most working-class people have never had much of a problem with hoping for and speculating about a vast windfall that would transform their lives. And the upper classes are not troubled by the notion of living on huge sums of unearned income.

The real nut that the lottery had not cracked until this weekend was a prudish section of the middle classes publicly, at least, appalled at the thought of people suddenly, without merit or hard work, getting their hands on massive sums of money. Acquiring riches purely by luck goes against all their principles. It disturbs the work ethic and a well-defined pecking order. To this retentive, uptight, stuffy mentality, the wild card of the lottery spells social chaos.

The sanctimonious voice of this group has been heard repeatedly this week predicting misery for those who might win a huge sum. A senior Anglican churchman warned that winning had "created an enormous lot of problems" for some people. The message seemed to be that hot polio should leave being millionaires to those already expert in that field. The rich man in his castle, the poor man at his gate.

Yet, despite all this hectoring, the will to resist the lottery has weakened, even among the most puritanical. In the spruce, enamelled halls of London's Georgian and Victorian terraced houses, the occupants have started dreaming, amid the carboic soap, of what they would do if luck happened to burden them with great riches. Imagine, they could buy that



house in Italy, say goodbye to that awful boss and move to a less Footieish residence in the capital. Everyone has their price. And £40m seems to be the figure at which few can resist a flutter.

This "descent" of the well-off into popular culture recalls an occasion when Elizabeth Taylor attended a dinner with Princess Margaret. The bejewelled actress duly flaunted her huge Krupp diamond ring, a gift from Richard Burton. "That is the most vulgar thing I have ever seen," sneered Her Royal Highness. "Would you like to try it on?" came Ms Taylor's reply. And moments later, with the Princess entranced, "Mmm... it's not so vulgar now, is it?"

So, we are all becoming dreamers, fantasists, hoping for wealth that the vast majority will never acquire. Is that so bad? The moralists would have us believe that this is a symptom of an unethical society, of greed and lust for money. But many people who hope to win a fortune have the most altruistic plans for its disposal. They would share it with their families, perhaps a few friends, and certainly use it to help the needy. Most people would love to make the world a better place, if only they had the money to do so.

There are, of course, deeply depressing aspects of the lottery culture. The television soap opera *Brookside* has chronicled the dangers of addiction in the character of Rosie Banks, who wins a lottery prize, only to gamble it away again. A woman who was once huddling with fun turns to stealing and lies to her

husband to hide her losses. There are plenty of people who have been dragged into similarly obsessive behaviour.

Participation in the lottery is often not a pleasant experience. People may approach it with cynicism, knowing the dreadful odds. But once that ticket is clutched in that saccharine hand, they feel sure they will win. Losing is a great disappointment, however irrational. The child that believed in Santa Claus begets the lottery optimist.

And even if dreaming of unworked-for riches is no longer sinful, it is a disturbing comment on the level of general disillusionment with other means of advancement. The belief that merit will be rewarded, that society is mobile, is regarded more as myth today than, say, a decade ago. Politicians offer their recipes for success, freeing up markets and training revolutions. But one suspects that few people have much faith in them.

The lottery is the only dream in town. It has, for some people, replaced politics as the most hopeful source of change. In the absence of a general feelgood factor, it offers a short-lived hope, one that lasts perhaps only a few days, only to be cruelly dashed on a Saturday night. Paradoxically, at a time when economic uncertainty is rife, many people are placing their hope in luck to improve their lives.

In short, it is good to dream and no bad thing that more people have this weekend shared in a little fantasy. But the lottery culture remains a sobering reflection upon the realities of 1996.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Tories need a 'volte-face' on Europe

From Mr Hugh Dykes, MP

Sir: If the Conservative Party is ever to reverse its unpopularity in the polls, in addition to waiting for the feel-good factor to arrive, it will also have to begin to act effectively on the main issue that divides its parliamentary party, Europe. Above all the Government must, at last, stand up bravely and speak the truth on a single European currency.

This is the most momentous decision any country can make. Since 1990, we have taken part in all of the steps regarding monetary union, culminating in the compelling report of central bank governors, including our own British head of the Bank of England. In fact, participating in a European single currency is one of the best economic opportunities this country has been offered since the Second World War.

The arguments for having one currency for all member nations are numerous and logical. It would allow all EC citizens to know exactly how much things cost, instead of getting caught between changing

exchange rates and suffering rip-offs (such as higher car prices in the UK). Travellers from the UK would be better off, because each time they change money now, they lose much of it in large fees. And creating a single currency would greatly reduce the waste and inefficiency caused by retaining separate currencies. In other words, it would be like using a universal credit card devoid of the usual charges.

As to the supposed loss of sovereignty involved, why is it that the other countries—even Denmark—wish to join? We need to remember that unlike the US, the EU will not be one, single country. No one has suggested this for decades. Would the French ever wish to give up their intensely proud national sovereignty? Far from it.

Monetary union undermines only the facade of self-rule—it really gives a factual say in the management of the unified currency as a full shareholder of the EU central bank. France prefers this solution to the current situation in which we are

forced to accept decisions over which we can only exert a weak influence. What wise words from Jean François Ponget, the former French foreign minister.

The British government must at last get away from acute party strife on Europe. A large majority of MPs from all parties favour European Monetary Union. Any far-sighted national leader must acknowledge that fact. It may mean trade-offs with the Labour Party and the Liberal Democrats, but that too could be in the true national interest. Why not, for example, postpone British Rail privatisation to get Labour support on EMU?

If you explain Europe properly, you will always get support from the public. Meanwhile, time is running out for the vital change of stance so necessary now in the Tory party. Yours faithfully, HUGH DYKES MP for Harrow East (Con) House of Commons London, SW1 5 January

A man's home or his prison?

From Dr Gary Slapper

Sir: "The house of everyone", it was proclaimed in a case in 1604, "is to him as his castle and fortress". This cherished credo is now open to widespread doubt, and whether a householder who injures or kills an intruder is convicted of a crime ("When have a go means death", 4 January) is highly unpredictable in the context of current law and practice.

The law on self-defence has remained essentially the same for decades. The reason why its uncertainties are now increasingly exposed to public scrutiny is that it is being relied upon more frequently by people trying to defend themselves and their property. One piece of Home Office research has shown that a patrolling police officer in London would only be likely to come within 100 yards of a burglary in progress once every eight years, and even then he would not necessarily know that the crime was taking place.

Rather than simply focus our attention on prosecutorial policy, the current debate about have-a-go-heroes should address the crucial social and economic problems of epidemic property crime and a crumbling policing system. Yours faithfully, GARY SLAPPER Law School Staffordshire University Stoke-on-Trent 5 January

From Chief Insp D. Scougal

Sir: I was saddened by the cover of Section Two (4 January) which had a Neighbourhood Watch sign juxtaposed with a handgun and a slogan "How far would you go?". Neighbourhood Watch is about looking after your property and that of your neighbours, taking sensible crime prevention action and reporting suspicious persons to the police. It has nothing to do with vigilante actions, violence or weapons.

Here in the Northumbria Police area, robust pro-active policing, good intelligence and partnership with councils, housing officers, social services, other agencies and our communities in Neighbourhood Watches have helped achieve a reduction in crime for the fourth year in succession. Yours faithfully, D. A. Y. SCAUGAL Chief Inspector Washington Area Command Washington, Tyne & Wear 4 January

From Ms Susan Wood

Sir: It would be reassuring if a civil liberties organisation such as Liberty, quoted in Mary Braid's article of 4 January, championed my civil liberty to enjoy a home free from the threat of burglary and the right to walk unmolested. Yours sincerely, SUSAN WOOD Woodford Halse, Northamptonshire

Making of a world city

From Mr Chris Farrow

Sir: As the former London Docklands director and presently the chief executive of Merseyside Development Corporation (MDC)—erstwhile owners of the Albert Dock in Liverpool—most of Paul Barker's points in his article "London calling: help!", 3 January seem to me to be wide of the mark.

Much of MDC's investment is actually devoted to mainstream industrial development. Only 2,000 of the 15,000 new jobs we have generated in our area are tourism and leisure-related. Liverpool and Merseyside's revival is due to its strong mixture of commercial, industrial and leisure sectors.

I have no doubt that South-west's National Lottery will produce the same positive outputs that the Albert Dock's Tate Gallery in Liverpool produced. Nevertheless, we should not lose sight of the fact that Henry Tate was able to endow this great institution with his seedcorn not from a lottery win but from the proceeds of his enterprise and industry trading and refining sugar from Liverpool. In order to buy these lottery tickets, most people will have to continue making things to make money. My advice is that London should actually pay more attention to the lessons successfully learned by Britain's many hard-pressed northern cities which have not been as well supported by Government or the lottery as London. Reinvest industries and skills—don't throw them away. Yours faithfully, CHRIS FARROW Chief Executive Merseyside Development Corporation Liverpool 4 January

From Mr George Atkinson

Sir: Paul Barker lists good theatres, good cinemas, art galleries, restaurants, parks, shops, as "trump cards" in the making of a "world city". He should add public and specialist libraries of world standing—such as the Library of Congress, the new Paris Bibliothèque nationale and the eventually completed British Library at St Pancras.

But no world city has the range and quality of specialist libraries that London has: the City of London Business Library, the British Architectural Library in Portland Place and its drawings collection in Portman Square, the library and civil engineering archives of the Institution of Civil Engineers, and the many other libraries of professional institutions, also the unique London Library in St James Square.

For business and scholarship, good libraries make a world city as much as good restaurants and good golf courses. Yours faithfully, GEORGE ATKINSON St Albans, Hertfordshire

Tory manifesto

From Mr P. Tomlin

Sir: In your edition of 3 January, you have a front-page headline: "Tory left to launch own manifesto". Scerves him right. Yours faithfully, P. TOMLIN Godalming, Surrey 3 January

DAVID AARONOVITCH Sordi affair



How chastening it must have been this week for Emma Nicholson to contemplate the political advancement of Home Office minister Anne Widdecombe. One left the party penniless, the other represented her government incessantly on radio and television. The contrasts are complete. Emma exudes caring from every pore. In the 19th century she would have dressed up in an elegant (though restrained) bonnet and spent Sundays distributing alms. Anne, who seems to possess all the spiritual qualities of a Torquemada, would have set up a soapbox in the village square to bid us remember that God had a purpose in creating poverty, and that we tampered with it at our peril.

Today's Emma wears discreet suits. Nothing is showy. Anne, on the other hand, seems to buy all her clothes in job lots at a theatrical costumier. On Wednesday's *Newsnight* she was garbed in a jacket of the McWiddecombe tartan—a combination of scarlet lines, with purple and green background—taken set off by a rakishly loose leather tie. By Thursday she had donned an alarming black-and-white striped effort bespattered with jewellery and sickled-down, jet-black coiffure. She looked like nothing so much as Henry VIII's jousting tent, as displayed at the Tower.

Yet there is something that Emma and Anne share—they both care about Arabs. Emma has done sterling work to try and save the Marsh Arabs from Saddam Hussein. Anne adores the no less proud and exotic traditions of the Saudi (or "Sordi") as she idiosyncratically pronounces it) royal family. And she wishes to save them the distressing and time-consuming business of negotiating lucrative contracts with countries other than Britain.

Arabism is, of course, an old Tory trait. For many Conservative men over the years, Arabs have seemed very attractive. And the knights of the desert understood about deference and defence, calling chaps Caruthers Pasha and putting chaps

in charge of their armies. Their hospitality was legendary. After finishing your sheep's eyes it was considered bad manners to refuse a boy for the night. For those educated at British public schools, inedible food washed down with pederasty was home from home.

This relationship worked well for Britain. It has meant a bonanza for our finest entrepreneurs, jobs for our workers and a chicken in all our pots. The only cloud has been this difference in emphasis between us and Arab regimes over matters like public beatings, bribery and human rights.

So when the Sordis objected to the dissident refugee, Mr al-Masari, being allowed to use Willesden as a base to bring down their royal family, there was a dilemma. We couldn't deport him to certain death in Riyadh, and we couldn't keep him for fear of the chicks leaping out of the pots. Would anyone take him? John Major, Anne Widdecombe and Malcolm Rifkind hid the phones. Many of our best pals said no thanks, they had quite enough dissidents of their own, and that actually an arms deal or bridge contract in Sordi would be good. Had the PM tried Cuba?

One hundred and fiftieth on the list was the tiny island of Dominica. Yes, they'd take him—in return for a large backhander. This was a brilliant stroke. The Sordis would be pleased, we would be rich, the Dominicans (who do not trade with the Sordis—or anyone else, really) could stop growing bananas, and even Mr al-Masari would eventually be reconciled to swapping Willesden for Bermuda shorts in the Caribbean.

Having come this far, Ms Widdecombe, why stop? You have admitted the triumph of self-interest over fair play—why wait upon the exigencies of exile and banishment? Could we not arrange (in return for preferential treatment over trade) to ship dissidents directly from other nations to small islands in the sun? Cut out the middle man. True, Emma wouldn't like it. But you don't have to worry about that any more.

QUOTE UNQUOTE

I think anyone with commonsense knows that to win £33m in one go can have terrible effects. It can totally destroy lives and bring misery—The Rt Rev Nigel McCulloch, Anglican Bishop of Wakefield, on the double rollover Lottery jackpot

The Government has grown rather used to bishops dismissing this, that and the other as "obscene"—George Walden, *Tory MP*

Of course, I do arouse primeval instincts, but my men can't just happen to be able to do it to several thousand people—Mick Jagger

The most under-rated thing in the world is a good hot bath with bubbles—Burt Reynolds, *actor*

As you get older, your skin seems to become too big for the rest of your body and you look as though you need a good ironing—Jill Gascoine, *actress*

The Liberal Democrats will not give one breath of life, beyond what is absolutely necessary, to this Government—Paddy Ashdown

We are now down to 25 breeding dukes. At this rate we shall soon need our own rare breed society—the Duke of Buccleuch

There are all sorts of kiss-and-tell things people could reveal after living with someone, but in my circle it is just not done—Angus Deayton, *television personality*

Homing in on the vodka

From Ms Ann McGregor

Sir: I was sorry to read (30 December) a small piece about the recent cold weather written by Will Bennett headed "In Russia only the dogs and the drunks are in peril". Homelessness is a growing and alarming problem in Russia, where people freeze to death by the dozen each week and are swept out of the gutters as part of the weekly cleansing of the cities. It is also on the increase, due to the decline in wages and loss of job security—if you lose your job and your house, in Russia you also lose your civil rights, welfare rights, your work permit, your right to be rehoused and even the right to reside in your home town. The best you can hope for is to be given a two-year stretch in jail for vagrancy.

If I had lost everything I would be grateful indeed for a bottle of vodka to warm my insides in temperatures way below zero! Yours faithfully, ANN McCREGOR Stromness, Orkney 1 January

Lottery threat

From Mr Dave Fox

Sir: Companies can insure against the adverse effects of the death or incapacity of key employees, but has a new niche market appeared—the insurance of companies against the effects of successful National Lottery syndicates? Even with a normal weekly jackpot, a company of, say, 50 employees, could be seriously weakened by the sudden retirement of a 10-employee syndicate, each waving a £900,000 cheque and two fingers.

The success of the lottery may even affect the future of industrial relations: increased wage settlements in return for no-lottery agreements or extended notice periods in cases of mass, lottery-financed resignations. Yours faithfully, DAVE FOX St Helens, Lancashire 2 January

Please, please, Mr Postman

From Miss P. Ford

Sir: In his letter of 30 December, Ken Wright, Assistant Managing Director of Royal Mail, assures first and second delivery of mail to their customers. Unfortunately, this service is not extended to us, as the Royal Mail ceased to deliver to this address on 4 January 1991, claiming their vans would be damaged on our road.

This is not true, as an assortment of vehicles, from cattle trucks to mini cars, drive over it. The farm is two miles from the centre of Bath. Yours faithfully, P. FORD Cheltenham Farm Landsdown, Bath

Freedom for sale

From Mr Andrew Palazzo

Sir: And so the capitalist triumph reaches its inevitable conclusion. Dr Mohammed al-Masari is to be deported as we show the world that even freedom of speech is for sale if the bid is high enough.

Makes you proud to be British, does it not? Yours, ANDREW PALAZZO London, E1 4 January

For the record

From Mr Peter Hitchens

Sir: I suppose I should thank you for describing me as editor of the *Daily Express* (letter, 4 January). How flattering. Richard Addis, who actually is the editor, may not feel quite so grateful. Yours faithfully, PETER HITCHENS Not the Editor *Daily Express* London, SE1 5 January

'Exchange' rates for stamp firm

From Mr Graham Warwick

Sir: I write following your conversation with your reporter Chris Blackhurst and your article published on Boxing Day about the stamp trade and my company, Warwick Estates Limited in the Isle of Man ("Stamps stuck with offshore discount", 26 December). I feel Mr Blackhurst may have gained the wrong impression, which I would like to correct.

When we sell cheap-rate Royal Mail stamps, we are not exploiting an offshore discount. True, some country's postal administrations do give discounts to their overseas agents. This is normally in the form of a commission on sales. We are not agents for any country's post office, and during my 35 years of trading, I have never been given a discount by any postal authority. The reason we are able to offer our UK customers a 10 per cent discount on currently valid British postage stamps is because my company operates as an international "exchange" for British and worldwide stamps.

We offer to buy issues of any major country from overstocked dealers around the world or we will exchange for stamps of the dealer's own country which he can sell at discount postage.

Mr Blackhurst has perhaps gained the impression that the stamps we recently offered at a 10 per cent discount below face were the 1995 Christmas issues. In fact, we were offering Christmas stamps from previous years. These, of course, are still perfectly valid for postage, as are all GB stamps since decimalisation in 1971. Yours faithfully, GRAHAM WARWICK Director Warwick Estates Limited Douglas Isle of Man 29 December



Detail from a 'Piper window' Photograph: John Lawrence

Piper's windows: a joint effort

From Ms June Osborne

Sir: Much as I welcome Ian MacKinnon's article on the lovely Nativity window at Ilfley ("Spotlight falls on forgotten 'Nativity', 1 January), I do think that credit should be given where it is due.

Many people do not realise that what are loosely termed the "John Piper windows", though designed by Piper, were not in fact made by him. Piper created the full-size cartoons, usually in gouache with collage, but after that he had to rely on very skilled artist-craftsmen to interpret his ideas in the al-

gether different medium of glass. This is no mechanical process, but one that requires infinite subtlety.

All the earlier windows designed by Piper were realised by Patrick Reynolds; the later ones either by Joseph Nuttgens, or more often, by David Wastley of High Wycombe. It was Wastley who made, and created the surround for, the Nativity window.

The significance of John Piper in the field of stained glass is immense; and this cannot be diminished by acknowledging the artistry of his collaborators. Yours faithfully, JUNE OSBORNE Charlbury, Oxfordshire 1 January

Letters should be addressed to Letters to the Editor, The Independent, One Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL (Fax 0171-293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk) and include a daytime telephone number.

Letters may be edited for length and clarity. We regret we are unable to acknowledge unpublished letters.

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Stock Exchange drama: Market-makers' role in removal becomes clearer as theories emerge on real reason behind chief executive's sacking

MPs call for inquiry into dismissal of Lawrence

SIMON PINCOMBE and DIANE COYLE

Politicians from all the main parties yesterday called for an urgent inquiry into the Stock Exchange's dismissal of Michael Lawrence, who was ousted on Thursday.

The call came as the smoke began to clear and a clearer picture emerged of the role the City's powerful market-makers took in removing Mr Lawrence, whom they saw as a threat to their very existence.

Malcolm Bruce, the Liberal Democrat Treasury spokesman, said: "The move clearly gives the impression of vested interests resisting change when change is necessary." Mr Bruce added that the Stock Exchange board should not be free to take decisions that could be of huge importance to the City and the economy without being accountable to Parliament.

He found cross-party support among other committee members. Barry Legg, Conservative MP for Milton Keynes SW, said: "When an organisation loses two chief executives, it suggests something is wrong with the organisation, not the individuals. Personality differences can usually be reconciled."

Clive Betts, a Labour member, said: "I want to be assured that we do not have people in charge of the Stock Exchange who are resistant to changes that are important for its future and the future of the City." He agreed that there seemed to be City vested interests trying to block essential reforms.

In the City it emerged that Mr Lawrence was sacked because he was costing practitioners too much money. While the bro-

kers and big investment banks were not prepared to comment publicly on his sudden departure, privately they admitted that his relentless programme of change was threatening their profitability.

"Mr Lawrence was not pig-sticked because the City blue bloods didn't like him," insisted one senior broker. "Rather he tried to make too many omelettes and broke one egg too many in the process."

The decision to press ahead with the introduction of an electronic "order-matching" system for share trading - to compete with the traditional "quote-driven" system - was the final straw which angered the mighty investment banks. But Mr Lawrence had already ruffled a broader City church with the introduction of "rolling settlement" and the Alternative Investment Market, both of which hit brokers in their pockets.

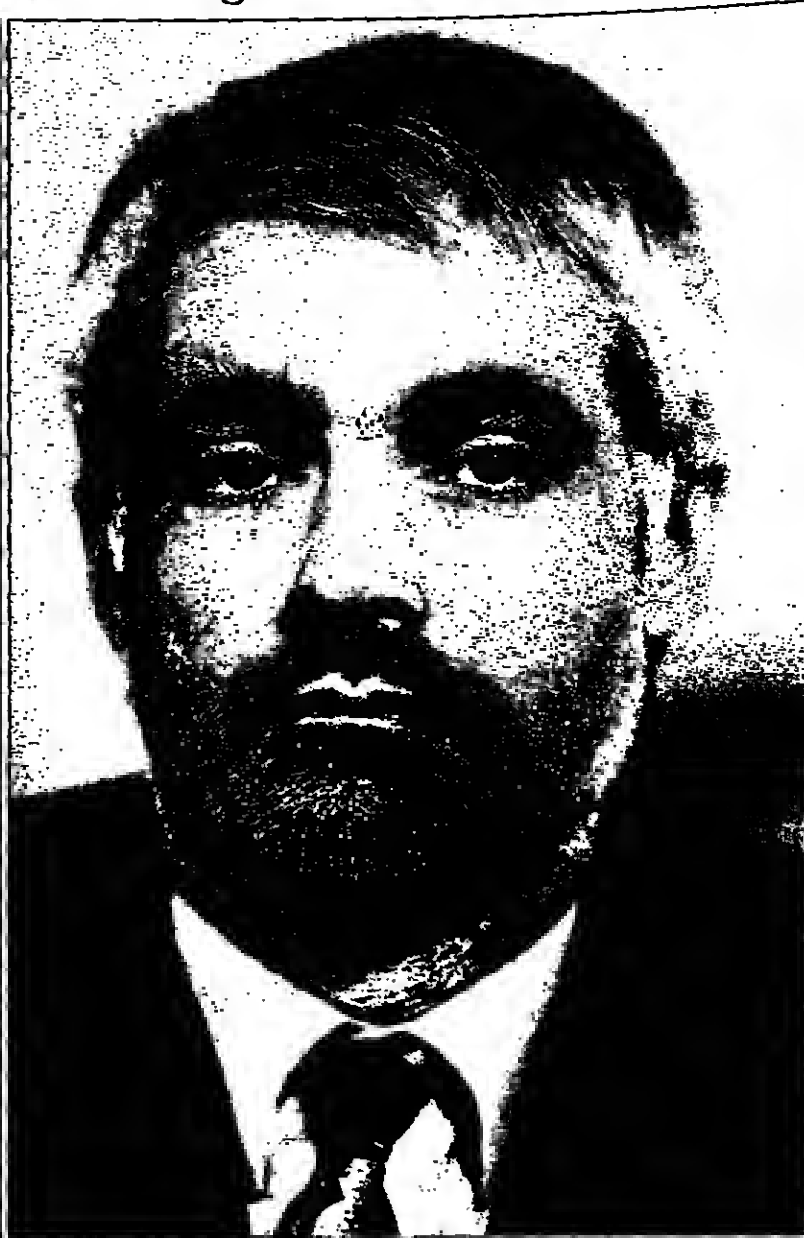
In Westminster, MPs were sceptical about the Bank of England's ability to resolve the Exchange's problems. Mr Legg said: "I am not sure the Bank of England will be forward-looking enough on this issue."

Mr Bruce said: "The Bank has not exactly covered itself in glory recently." However, Alistair Darling, the Labour Party's City spokesman, said yesterday: "For its own survival the Stock Exchange needs to unite quickly around a strategy. It may be that the Bank of England should use its influence and knock some heads together."

The Bank of England sees itself as a troubleshooter, helping a prominent City institution overcome a specific problem. Although it took responsibility



Troubleshooting: Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England (left), and Alistair Darling of the Labour Party



10 crucial minutes under the tapestries

TOM STEVENSON City Editor

Michael Lawrence discovered he was to face a vote of no-confidence only half an hour before the scheduled 11 o'clock board meeting in the starkly modern board room at the top of the Stock Exchange building on Old Broad Street. He had little time to prepare the most important address of his two years as chief executive.

He spoke for only a few minutes to the 17 assembled board members, three short of a full complement, seated around the large crescent shaped table that dominates the room. Less wood-panelled old City than medieval court, his fate was to be decided under the shadow of a series of magnificent tapestries, representing the City of London.

John Kemp-Welch, his chairman, then informed Mr Lawrence that the loss of confidence with which he was viewed by both the board and the Stock Exchange's members had reached crisis point. A vote would be taken immediately on whether he should be required to resign his position.

At this point, barely 10 minutes into the meeting, Mr Lawrence left the room for the last time. He knew the result of the vote before it was even taken and went straight to his office to consult with trusted members of the executive he had created in his attempt to build a more commercial structure than the old boys' club deciding his fate in the board room.

Back in the boardroom, the 17 board members, representatives of the most powerful market-making firms in the City and some of the biggest institutional investors, a director of the Bank of England and a captain of industry, cast their votes. It was not unanimous, but there was never any doubt about the result.

Comment, page 19

Colombia bonanza for BP

HUGH O'SHAUGNESSY Bogota

The amount of oil and gas found by BP in Colombia is much larger than originally suspected and production is set to rise very steeply, bringing a large bonanza to the company. According to industry observers here, the company will be producing one million barrels of oil within 10 years, slightly less than currently comes out of the UK sector of the North Sea.

BP itself will not confirm the reports but does say that current production from the Cusiana-Cupatzen field is rising very fast and that it expects to be producing 500,000 barrels a day by the end of next year. Last month's production stood at 180,000 bpd up from 40,000 bpd in December 1994.

One black spot in the situation is the continuing disruption of the oil industry by guerrillas. Shell claimed last month that since 1986 guerrillas had attacked pipelines 371 times and caused losses for repair and clean-up approaching £30m. The 1.3 million barrels of crude which escaped from the principal pipeline linking the Cano Limon field to the Pacific port of Coveñas was equivalent to four times that lost by the Exxon Valdez off the coast of Alaska in 1989.

December sales dive closes disappointing year for cars

RUSSELL HOTTEN

New UK car sales dived in December, ending a difficult year in which the motor industry saw only a 1.8 per cent rise in annual sales despite aggressive marketing and cut-price deals in the showroom.

The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders described it as a "disappointing end to a disappointing year" and forecast only another modest rise in 1996.

The society's figures published yesterday showed sales last month down 2.32 per cent to 71,540, the worst December since 1991, leaving the yearly total at 1,945,366.

Private sales in 1995 fell 3 per cent, and the yearly total was propped up by a 6.3 per cent rise in the company market.

Although there were highlights, including a strong rise in Rover's sales in December, and a first successful year for Dae-

woo cars, the industry was pleased to see the back of 1995. The figures reflect the patchy recovery of the UK economy after recession in the early 1990s when annual new car sales dipped from a late 1980s high of 2.3 million to less than 1.6 million. The society forecasts sales of 1.97 million this year, with the important 2 million mark reached in 1997.

The sharp fall in December - traditionally the second-weak-

est month after July - was probably a correction after unexpected rises in the two previous months.

Ian Shepherdson, economist at HSBC Greenwell, pointed out that fourth-quarter sales were 6.4 per cent up on 1994's figure, and the best quarterly performance since the final three months of 1992.

He said: "We expect car sales to rise by 5 per cent or so in 1996 as incomes rise and interest

rates fall. But sales are increasingly volatile and keen pricing is all-important."

Rover had a difficult first few months of 1995, and there was talk of owner BMW losing patience. But the company took a 23.56 per cent market share in December, due largely to bringing forward the launch of its 200 model. The new Rover 400 and 100 were the top two best sellers for the month. Rover sold 240,007 cars in

1995, giving the company a 12.34 per cent market share, against sales of 245,240 and a 12.83 per cent share in 1994.

The three top-selling cars of 1995 were all Fords: Escort, Fiesta and Mondeo. Ford took its customary place as the UK's biggest seller, taking a 21.11 per cent market share, against 21.91 per cent in 1994. Next came Vauxhall, with market share of 15.12 per cent (16.25 per cent), Daewoo, the Korean com-

pany that does not use car franchises but sells direct to the public, had a successful first year in the UK market, selling 13,169 cars to take a 0.68 per cent share of the market.

Other companies to enjoy a good 1995 included Jaguar, which sold 8,727 cars (6,659); BMW, whose market share rose to 2.83 per cent (2.38 per cent); Fiat, whose share rose to 3.64 per cent (3.07); and Volkswagen, at 4.02 per cent (3.90).

Survey shows insurers reluctant to cut costs

Insurance companies are refusing to cut charges on the policies they sell, in spite of being forced to disclose them for the first time, a survey from a senior financial services watchdog reveals, writes Nic Cicutti.

Despite hopes of a price war in the wake of new rules from the Personal Investment Authority, more than 20 per cent of the companies it sampled now charge more for the policies they sell than they did a year ago.

The PIA survey, published earlier this week, showed that among the 67 companies offering 25-year unit linked pension schemes, 14 were more expensive than a year earlier. Over that length of time charges by some companies, including household names such as Pearl and London & Man-

chester, can be up to a third or more of a policy's total proceeds.

Potential policy proceeds of about £23,000 can be cut by as much as £22,000 by some companies. By contrast, others, including Equitable Life or National Mutual Life, will only deduct charges.

The regulator's survey came out for the first time last week, a year after the introduction of rules making insurers give specific details of their expenses to their clients. When the new rules were introduced, it was claimed they boosted competitiveness and led to cheaper prices for policyholders. But the survey shows that although the level of charges fell by 3.3 per cent for all the firms in the survey, the drop was far greater among life companies with highest costs.

Marks & Spencer denies child labour claims

NIGEL COPE

Marks & Spencer was embroiled in a potentially damaging controversy last night over the alleged use by its suppliers of child labour and the incorrect labelling of some of its garments.

Marks & Spencer, which prides itself on buying British, has withdrawn a range of women's pyjamas which had been labelled as "Made in the UK" when they had been made in Morocco.

The decision comes as the company braces itself for a two-part *World In Action* documentary entitled "Saint Michael" - has the halo slipped? - to be screened by Granada Television on Monday.

The programme is expected to make allegations that some M&S suppliers are exploiting child labour in Third World countries and incorrectly labelling the garments as made in the UK.

Yesterday Marks & Spencer said it had never knowingly sourced garments made using child labour and denied that other incorrectly labelled clothing could be available in M&S stores.

On the incorrect labelling M&S said: "We believe this was a one-off mistake."

It said it would not be paying for the pyjamas, which had been supplied by Desmond & Sons, of Northern Ireland. The company has "categorically de-

nieed" allegations that its Moroccan sub-contractor was using child labour.

Desmond is one of Northern Ireland's oldest clothing manufacturers and enjoys close links with M&S.

The *World In Action* programme is expected to make a series of allegations against M&S suppliers. The company ran into trouble last summer when it was accused of copying the design of a swimsuit.

Any further allegations on incorrect labelling would be damaging for a company that says it buys 78 per cent of its products from UK suppliers. M&S has built its reputation on the strength of its brand and a trustworthy, honest image.

Rating cut at Eagle Star

NIC CICUTTI

The credit rating of Eagle Star, the insurance company owned by tobacco giant BAT, was dramatically cut last night by Moody's Investors Service in the latest episode of a crisis that has hit the industry over profit fears.

The new rating, from A2 to A3, places Eagle Star at the bottom of the category normally considered "good". Embarrassingly for the insurer, Moody's hinted yesterday that the grading might have been even lower but for the support it receives from BAT, its parent, itself rated A2.

Rafael Villarreal, senior analyst at Moody's, said the action followed Eagle Star's relatively poor performance in the general insurance sector at a potentially good time in the cycle.

He said: "This was long overdue. Eagle Star has not benefited from the upturn. We will be waiting to see how it performs over the next two years." Moody's has been downgrading Eagle Star for the past five years, but for the past three years has taken no action against the insurer. Eagle Star said: "We are dis-

appointed but note that it seems that other companies have been downgraded and we are not alone. We believe we have a range of competitive products that will help us through the downturn."

Standard & Poor's also said yesterday that it was bringing forward reviews of a number of insurers, with possible downgrades of previous assessments for several firms in the sector.

Among those already considered vulnerable by S&P are Clerical Medical, downgraded this week from AA- to A+, and Scottish Provident, which was moved down from A+ to AA.

The downgrading comes after Norwich Union, the UK's second-largest mutual insurer, had its financial strength rating reduced by Standard & Poor's in October.

Standard Life, the large Scottish mutual, and Pearl, owned by the Australian insurance giant AMP last year both retained their AAA ratings. In Pearl's case, this came after reference was made to the fact that, while it faced the same problems as the rest of the industry, its parent was financially sound.

STOCK MARKETS					
Index	Close	Day's change	Change (%)	1995/96 High	1995/96 Low
FTSE 100	3704.50	-8.60	-0.3	3715.60	2954.20
FTSE 250	4071.20	-2.20	-0.1	4071.40	3300.90
FTSE 100	1841.40	-3.80	-0.2	1845.20	1482.40
FT Small Cap	1969.67	+3.27	+0.2	1983.11	1678.61
FT All Share	1814.39	-3.18	-0.2	1837.78	1489.23
Nikkei	5182.84	-11.20	-0.2	5207.44	3832.08
Dow Jones	20669.03	+51.03	+0.2	20669.03	14485.41
Hong Kong	10629.90	-44.00	-0.4	10573.90	6987.93
Frankfurt	2331.88	+7.56	+0.3	2331.88	1910.96

INTEREST RATES					
Index	1 Month	3 Month	6 Month	1 Year	2 Year
UK short sterling	6.47	6.38	7.50	8.65	7.68
UK medium gilt	5.99	5.50	5.68	7.87	6.08
US long bond	0.56	0.72	3.02	4.74	5.07
Germany	3.81	3.63	6.01	7.69	6.77

CURRENCIES					
Index	1 Month	3 Month	6 Month	1 Year	2 Year
\$/£	1.57	1.56	1.56	1.56	1.56
DM/£	1.95	1.95	1.95	1.95	1.95
¥/£	162.824	162.824	162.824	162.824	162.824

OTHER INDICATORS					
Index	1 Month	3 Month	6 Month	1 Year	2 Year
Oil Brent \$	18.92	+0.24	18.70	149.8+3.1pc	2.6 18 Jan
Gold \$	396.10	+2.35	375.75	199.5 2.1pc	4.3 22 Jan
Gold £	255.10	+1.02	240.85	Base Rates	8 50pc 5.25

'Independent' Money on Saturday					
In the 'Weekend' section today					
• Educated Guesses: Jo Davis reviews the tipsters	22				
• Frozen Pipes: Who pays for the damage?	22				
• Tessa Choice: A guide to the new generation	23				
• National Lottery: The winning numbers so far	24				

JP 11/10/95

Time heads are banged together at Exchange

COMMENT

If the Government chooses to sit on the sidelines while the equity market splits even more decisively between the wholesale and retail components, we will know just how much it really cares about the Sids.

To lose one chief executive may be a misfortune; to lose two in less than three years looks like carelessness. Now that Michael Lawrence has been so unceremoniously thrown overboard, the London Stock Exchange must confront the hard question that goes to the very heart of its continued existence. Is there any longer a rationale for such a body in today's deregulated electronic markets?

However the Stock Exchange eventually answers that question, there are other parties with a legitimate interest in the outcome. There is the Bank of England, with its long-standing concern about London's continued vitality as an international financial centre. And small investors have a right to be worried about any decision that leaves them even further out in the cold.

Ten years ago, the Stock Exchange lost an empire – but appeared to pull off the trick of finding a new one. Gone was the cosy club that presided over a cartel of jobbers and brokers, who earned rich rewards from minimum capital. Gone was the physical presence of the stock market at the Exchange in Throgmorton Street, as Big Bang led to a scattering of the market-makers to all quarters and the onset of screen-based trading.

Despite these revolutionary changes, the Stock Exchange retained a crucial role in the new devolved market by presiding over Seag, the system that disseminated the price quotations of individual market-

makers to the market at large. It also continued to underpin the settlement of the market through Talisman. Through providing these crucial services, the Stock Exchange was able to participate in the remarkable expansion in equity trading in London in the late 1980s. When recapitalised City security houses grabbed a large share of international trades, particularly in European equities, the Stock Exchange, by now grandly renamed as the International Stock Exchange, shared in the glory.

The 1990s brought a rude awakening as the Stock Exchange was caught on the wrong foot again and again. While other financial centres successfully modernised their settlement procedures, London's trailed behind. Bursars, the all-singing and dancing attempt to regain lost ground, had to be abandoned – costing the job of Peter Rawlins, who had been brought in to oversee the project. The Bank of England had to step in as project manager for the replacement project, Crest, with development capital of £12m provided by a consortium of 69 firms.

The Bank's intervention served notice on the Stock Exchange: if it could not carry out a key strategic function – the modernisation of settlement – then the City would not wait indefinitely. At the same time, the new system aroused legitimate fears that small investors would be short-changed, with higher costs through the use of nominee accounts. One of the key reasons why Taurus foundered was that it had un-

successfully attempted to square every interest in settlement, from custodians and small investors to the big market-makers. Crest, by contrast, was specifically designed for high-value transactions.

Now the Stock Exchange faces an even more fundamental challenge in the form of order-based rather than price quote-based trading. Despite Tradepoint's slow start, the economics from order-based trading are proving a successful attraction for rival financial centres in winning back business from London. The strategic interest for London as an international financial centre is therefore to have such a system. However, that militates against the commercial interests of the big market-makers who dominate the board of the Stock Exchange.

Despite their opposition, such a system will come to play an important role in London as elsewhere. Whether it does so under the auspices of the Stock Exchange is another matter. The example of Crest should serve to concentrate the minds of those still doubtful of the need for the exchange's new trading system, Sequence VI, to incorporate an order-matching system for big company trades.

The alternative is fragmentation of the market. The Bank of England's view is that the development of competing markets will not operate against the interests of the City as an international financial centre or the small investor. Yet while the big players, both institutional investors and market-makers,

can be expected to thrive under the creation of a premier league market, small investors might well lose out.

If the Government chooses to sit on the sidelines while the equity market splits even more decisively between its wholesale and retail components, we will know just how much it really cares about the Sids whose money it sought so seductively in the 1980s.

Tackling Murdoch over sports monopoly

Upsetting Rupert Murdoch is a dangerous game for politicians – particularly those in such a parlous state as the present Government. Despite this, John Major appeared to throw caution to the winds yesterday by going public on his opposition to Mr Murdoch's growing monopoly of TV rights to big sports events.

Three cheers for Mr Major. The trouble is that what he was proposing by way of remedy didn't amount to very much – a move to beef up protection for the handful of listed events that are currently available on "free" TV, such as Wimbledon and the FA Cup Final.

Mr Murdoch has not moved on these, even though he could do so under the rules. The current legislation merely prohibits the exclusive broadcast of the listed events on pay-per-view basis – a market that does not yet exist in the UK. Nothing precludes

a pay-TV broadcaster from pitching for the rights to, say, the FA Cup.

To date, BSkyB has been perfectly content to sew up the live rights to major matches, allowing one of the terrestrial broadcasters to show a few high-ticket fixtures. Even in the most recent Football League deal, which includes a listed event, the FA Cup Final, BSkyB has decided not to rock the boat. Under the arrangement, the Final will be shown on ITV.

By tightening the rules on listed events, for instance through prohibiting all pay-TV exclusive broadcasts, Mr Major's Government would merely pre-empt any future raid by Mr Murdoch and his associates. If the Government really wants to rein Mr Murdoch in, it will have to do a great deal more. But first, it ought to wait to see the outcome of the Office of Fair Trading inquiry into, among other things, the exclusivity deals signed by BSkyB and major sporting organisations. If these are shown to be anti-competitive, BSkyB may have to change its strategy.

Even then, Mr Murdoch's deep, deep pockets may be hard to offset. His pay-TV empire in the UK is now so profitable that few can hope to challenge him when it comes to bidding for rights. The most a *laissez-faire* Government can hope to do is jump hard on any anti-competitive behaviour (restrictive practices, predatory pricing) and hope that other media companies find the money and guts to take the kind of risks Mr Murdoch was prepared to run.

Granada faces growing doubts over Forte offer

MATTHEW HORSMAN and JOHN SHEPHERD

Doubts over Granada's ability to win the fight for Forte deepened yesterday, when a leading analyst said Granada would have to sweeten its offer drastically to around 380p a share to clinch the hostile battle.

According to informed sources, Granada is unwilling to bid much more than about 370p, and would be prepared to walk away rather than overpay.

Kleinwort Benson, which has one of the City's most respected leisure teams, said Forte had a break-up value of at least 380p a share. Granada "will need to produce a final offer increased to the region of our break-up value and a more rational, detailed and credible set of plans for the whole of Forte if it is to prise investors away."

Granada has until Tuesday to raise its bid. The initial offer is for four Granada shares and £23.25 in cash for every 15 Forte shares, valuing the company at 320p a share based on Granada's close last night of 647p.

The takeover battle will help determine the future of the Savoy Group, in which Forte has a majority stake but only minority voting control. Speculation grew yesterday that the Womert family, one of the controlling shareholders of the Savoy, could be willing to sell at the right price, fueling rumours that the company could go to another buyer in the aftermath of the Granada bid.

According to Kleinwort Ben-

son, Forte's offer of an £800m share buy-back values Forte at 368p a share and would enhance the company's earnings per share in the year to January 1996.

Granada yesterday said it would make a final decision about an increased offer next week. The TV and leisure company is also expected to detail precisely how it intends to enhance Forte's profitability by at least £100m a year through re-branding, cost-cutting, centralised purchasing of food and beverages and higher prices at Forte's hotels.

But analysts have challenged Granada's claims. "More than 60 per cent of demand for rooms at Posthouse comes from the wholesale market," an analyst said. "We are not talking about people booking a room for a night but about people booking thousands of nights. If you ask them to pay more they will tell



Bidder: Gerry Robinson, Granada's chief executive

you to sod off. They can easily take their business elsewhere."

Granada's institutional shareholders are said to be concerned about the prospect of a sharply higher offer, and many appear to prefer that the company either retire or make a separate bid for Forte's restaurants businesses, which Forte has agreed to sell for £1.05bn to Whitbread. In the event of a higher offer for the assets, Forte and Whitbread would split the premium paid.

But Granada is believed to have ruled out such a separate offer, claiming that it wants both the restaurants and the hotels to achieve the economies of scale it has identified.

Analysts said yesterday that it was hard to see how Granada could justify a much higher offer, particularly as it has now ruled out using its 11 per cent stake in BSkyB, the satellite broadcaster, as leverage.

The bid battle will be decided largely by institutional shareholders. More than 40 per cent of Forte's shares are held by index funds, which stand to be the main beneficiary of the company's £800m share buy-back plans. At Forte's minimum offer of 330p a share plus the 23p distribution of Savoy shares, the whole package is worth 368p per share.

The index funds will also be left with 80 per cent of their Forte shares, which are guaranteed to return dividend increases of 20 per cent in each of the next three years.

Screen scrap: Murdoch's increasing dominance of key events may be target for new legislation



Hot potato: John Major last summer, launching the Government's sports policy document. BSkyB's dominance of TV coverage is under review Photograph: PA

Major hints at challenge to BSkyB sports

MATTHEW HORSMAN Media Editor

Rupert Murdoch's dominance of televised sports may become the target of new legislation, John Major, the Prime Minister, hinted yesterday.

The news sent shares in BSkyB, Mr Murdoch's 40 per cent-owned satellite broadcaster, down 7p to 413p, amid growing concerns that his lucrative near-monopoly might come under direct attack.

In his first public comment on the controversial issue of sport rights, Mr Major said the Government was considering ways of further protecting the handful of top sporting events that are still broadcast on terrestrial television.

"This is an interesting debate," Mr Major told BBC's *Breakfast News*, "and it is one that is under consideration at the moment, but no conclusions have been reached."

To date, both leading parties have shied away from criticising Mr Murdoch, whose stable of newspapers has been influential during election campaigns.

BSkyB has secured the rights to all Premier League Football matches, Rugby League and a share of the Football League. Under current legislation, a handful of events cannot be broadcast exclusively on a pay-per-view basis. These include the FA Cup Final and certain Wimbledon tennis matches. However, the current rules do not prevent the listed events

from being broadcast on pay-TV – for instance, BSkyB's Sky Sports network, which is available on a subscription basis only via satellite or cable.

Last year, several media companies lobbied the Government to include firmer protection of listed events in the new Broadcasting Bill, which will receive a second reading in the House of Lords in two weeks. However, the draft version of the legislation did not include any references to sport rights.

Mr Murdoch's dominance of sport is the target of an inquiry by the Office of Fair Trading, which is also reviewing the terms under which BSkyB makes its own channels available to the cable industry.

The BBC has also expressed privately its concern over Mr Murdoch's growing monopoly, although the public service broadcaster has teamed up with BSkyB to broadcast *Match of the Day* – highlights of Premier League matches.

New legislation on listed events would have to be balanced by other concerns, according to the Government. Few want to return to the days of a duopoly made up of the BBC and ITV, which served to limit the amount of money flowing to professional sports.

With the entry of Mr Murdoch's broadcasting service, the value of sport contracts has soared to record levels. Sky claims it has improved the coverage of sporting events.

IN BRIEF

Welsh Water rejects separate listing

Welsh Water said it was unwilling to give an undertaking to the water regulator, Ofwat, to separately list its water utility subsidiary as a pre-condition to its offer for South Wales Electricity. Welsh Water said a listing would undermine the benefits of the acquisition of Swalec for customers and shareholders. Stock Exchange regulations "would inhibit the efficient management" of the existing Welsh Water and Swalec businesses as a combined group.

Decline in company failures slows

The downward trend in the number of company failures continued last year but at a much slower pace than in 1994. There was a drop of 94, or 4 per cent, in the number of receiverships and administration orders in 1995, compared with a 35 per cent decline in 1994, according to accountancy firm Touche Ross. But December recorded the smallest number of appointments in one month since 1989. Last year the highest reductions occurred in East Anglia and the South-west. The number of failures in Wales, the West Midlands and Scotland increased.

Bundesbank paves way to rate cut

In an unexpected move that opens the way to future interest rate cuts, the German Bundesbank lent banks an extra DM3bn (£1.3bn) through repurchase agreements to ease a shortage of funds in the money market. It was only the second time in a year that there has been an additional tender designed to stop market interest rates from rising.

BA hopeful on Peking landing rights

British Airways said it hoped for an early resolution of talks between the UK and Chinese governments on landing rights at Hong Kong and Peking. BA plans to double services on the Hong Kong-Peking routes have stalled. A source close to the talks said no agreement had been reached because China is demanding access to Hong Kong by a fourth mainland Chinese airline.

General Electric wins \$700m order

America's General Electric has won an order worth \$700m (£466m) from Philippine Airlines for engines to power aircraft ordered last week from Boeing and Airbus Industrie. Rolls-Royce hid for some of the work, though the airline has not ordered R-R engines for some 20 years.

Adobe Systems shares plunge

Shares in Adobe Systems, the Californian computer software group, slumped 38 per cent in Wall Street trading yesterday when it reported heavy write-offs and a \$11.8m loss for the previous year.

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

Edited by TOM STEVENSON

Choosing the building blocks of recovery

Shares in building companies had a pretty appalling time of it for the first 10 months of 1995 as the housing market stagnated, the private finance initiative struggled to gain momentum and commercial building work continued to be available at only water-tight margins.

But from the beginning of November, shares, especially in the pure building companies, bounced sharply, recovering much of their underperformance relative to the rest of the market. As the chart below shows, when sentiment changes in this sector, shares can move very sharply – Laing, for example, has seen its shares rise more than 25 per cent in the past two months on little volume.

What has driven the rise is the belief among investors that conditions cannot deteriorate any further, that the trend for interest rates is probably down, claims from building societies like Halifax that housing transactions are set for noticeable improvements this year and in 1997, and the dramatic underperformance of most building shares over the past two years.

Whether the rise is justified depends on how much you believe that house-builders have really adjusted their cost bases and working practices to cope with what is likely to be a relatively low-inflation environment with house prices probably static in real terms. Recent profits warnings from Cala and Rainie suggest not all the pain has yet been taken account of.

As a result the price/earnings ratios of the pure builders, ranging from 13.5 for Barratt to 17 for Bryant look pretty demanding in the context of a market rating of only 13. A 15 per cent aver-

age premium seems to expect more profit upgrades than appear likely. No one expects the first half of this year to be particularly rewarding for house-builders so a great deal is being asked of the second-half recovery.

As ever, selectivity is the key, and the quality managements of Berkeley and Barratt, their ability to drive volume growth and (certainly in Berkeley's case) a strong product offer are attractive. Redrow is also a quality company but probably up with events.

As with the builders, the materials companies demand a careful company-by-company approach. Even if the housing market does pick up dur-

ing the year, the spend on joinery and fittings is likely to lag consumption of heavier materials such as concrete, blocks and bricks.

Prices of aggregates held up pretty well last year, certainly much better than those for lighter products, which face more competition from imports and a much more fragmented market. There has also been quite a lot of consolidation of the heavy side of the sector (the Wimpey/Larmac asset swap, Minorco's acquisition of Tjicon) which should make for greater efficiency and so rising profits.

CRH is probably the best quality company within the sub-sector. Travis

Perkins and Polypipe also catch the eye. Wolsley and RMC are safe plays.

But for those looking for a bit more excitement, there are a host of recovery stories to choose from. Caradon is probably the most extreme example, a company with many good businesses that took its eye off the ball and could benefit from the appointment of a new chief operating officer.

Stores face more price worries

The spate of price-cutting by some of the larger supermarket groups rather clouds the picture for investors who might have been considering the sector in 1996. Safeway's decision to cut the price of 70 lines by a third during January follows similar action by Sainsbury and Iceland in the last few days.

Most analysts are dismissing these campaigns as mere jockeying for position rather than a prelude to a full-scale price war. However, most are agreed that the price-cutting will not stop here. With Tesco piling on market share and Asda and Safeway improving all the time, Sainsbury is expected to launch a much more significant campaign by the spring.

Sainsbury is phasing out its Saver loyalty card next month. It is likely to use the money saved with these discounts to invest in lower prices across the board. But until Sainsbury makes its move uncertainty will continue to depress the entire sector.

Share price performances among

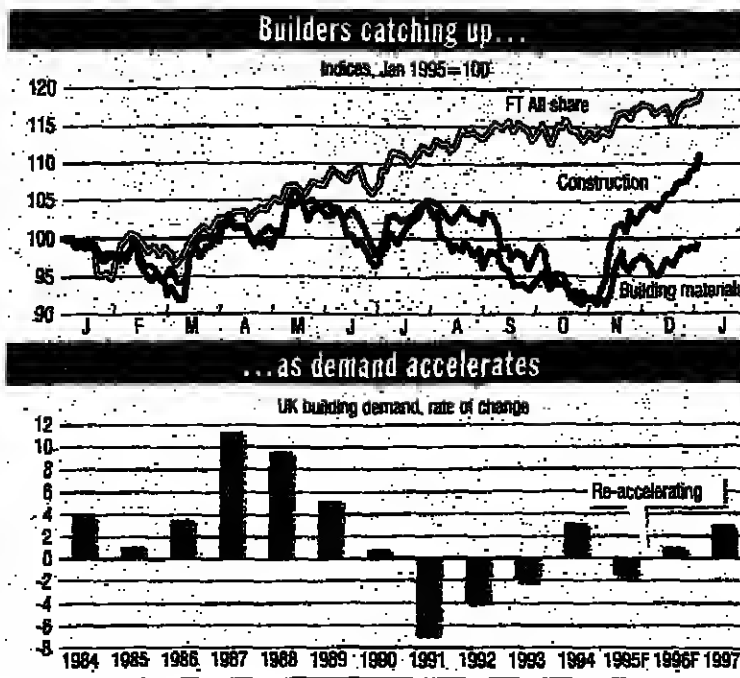
the supermarkets have already differed widely over the last 12 months, with clear winners and losers emerging. Top of the pile is Asda, whose shares have risen by more than 70 per cent over the year as it has consolidated its position as a lower-priced alternative. Tesco has also risen strongly as it outmanoeuvred Sainsbury with its loyalty card and keener prices. Argill has outperformed the FTSE 100 on the back of healthy sales growth.

The clear loser is Sainsbury, whose shares have slumped from 477p in September to just 381p as the City became alarmed at its declining market share and inaction. Kwik Save and Iceland have also been struggling.

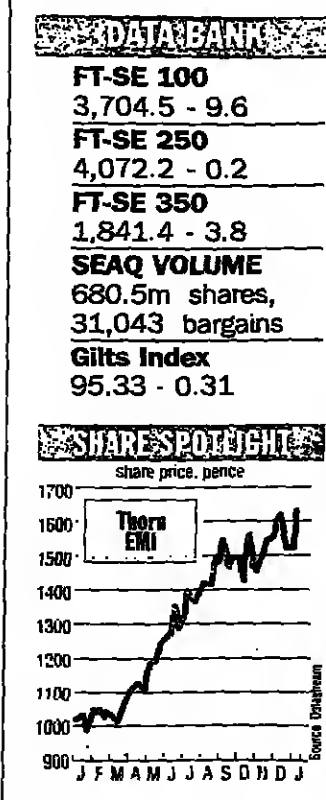
This month should provide more information on relative performance when most of the supermarket releases trading updates. William Morrison led the way yesterday when it reported a healthy gain in like-for-like sales of 4.3 per cent during December and a 3.1 per cent increase on the year to December.

Waitrose, part of the privately owned John Lewis Partnership, yesterday claimed it had enjoyed its most successful Christmas ever, with sales for the year up 14 per cent on last year and sales in the last week before Christmas up 30 per cent on the 1994 level.

The most attractive stocks are still Asda and Tesco, which are calling the shots in the war at the moment. But with price pressures likely to reduce margins, the immediate prospects for supermarket shares are not too encouraging. Until the pricing picture becomes clearer, investors are advised to leave the sector well alone.



market report/shares



Worthy but dull generators suffering a power failure

Shares of the two leading generators are suffering a power failure. Since peaking in the summer National Power and PowerGen have underperformed about their tougher trading environment and the looming second instalment on the partly-paid shares.

Dividend yields, for so long the big price prop, are much more humdrum and trading prospects solid but exceedingly dull. The Government's decision to refer the generators' bids for regional electricity companies to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission has also eroded sentiment. And even a £44m share buy-back by National Power produced only a glimmer of enthusiasm.

This week Goldman Sachs made cautious noises about the two generators and there is talk of other investment houses turning negative.

The two privatised utilities

arrived on the market nearly four years ago when the Government sold 60 per cent of their capital. It unloaded the remaining 40 per cent last year with investors paying in three instalments. The second round is due on 6 February when NP shareholders have to find 170p a share and PG shareholders 185p.

With the Tories' grip on power even weaker than a year ago there are fears many of the generators' small shareholders will be tempted to sell their partly-paid shares, rather than put in even more cash.

NP's shares, 558p last year, held at 436p and the partly-paid traded at 139p. PG, 607p at their high, fell 7p to 513p with the partly-paid off 7p at 197p.

National Grid, easier at 198p, was again the subject of some big trades with SBC Warburg in the thick of the activity. Seaq put volume at



MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

Stock market reporter of the year

nearly 38 million. The RECs are the best-performing blue chip, achieving a 9p gain to 276p. Sun Alliance added 11p to 380p, Commercial Union 13p to 623p and Legal & General 11p to 687p.

There is excited talk that a bidder could appear next week. National Westminster Bank, down 3p to 654p, is our rumoured predator: an overseas strike is also anticipated.

Thorn remained top of the pops on hopes Sir Colin Southgate, chairman, will soon produce details of the music and rental demerger. The shares gained 23p to 1,611p.

BSkyB fell 7p to 413p. In early trading the satellite tele-

vision group was the subject of a double-whammy - the Government's decision to look at the way BSkyB has tied up so many sporting events at the expense of the BBC and ITV, and suggestions Granada planned to sell its 6.5 per cent shareholding to support its struggle for Forte.

Granada's rejection of the sale talk helped lift BSkyB shares off their 405p low.

Daily Mail & General Trust 'A' gained 85p to 1,260p on a Merrill Lynch recommendation; RMC, the building materials group, suffered a 27p hit to 86p as NatWest Securities cut its forecasts from £326m to £331m and from £355m to £325m.

Latest shots in what the market regards as the "phoney" supermarket price war left J Sainsbury down 3p to 381p and trimmed Argill and Tesco.

Marks & Spencer lost 5p to

432p on its withdrawal of incorrectly labelled clothing and worries about next week's TV programme which is expected to allege that some M&S suppliers are exploiting overseas child labour.

Waverley Mining jumped 15p to 111p on hopes its Australian associate has made a diamond find and goldminer Bakyrchik rose 35p to 325p on the firm gold price.

Pan Andean Resources improved 1.25p to 18.5p with, it was said, some of the former shareholders of Aran Energy switching into the shares. Aran was taken over for £203m by Statoil, the Norwegian state oil company, and settlement cheques went out this week.

Stanford Rook, developing a TB treatment, continued its progress, gaining a further 35p to 310p. But Winchester Multi-Media's disastrous publishing venture lowered the shares another 3p to 33p.

Reunion Mining, a flop since it arrived on the market last month, rose 3p to 66p in busy trading.

Algy Cluff, whose Cluff Resources has been taken over by Ashanti, is rumoured to be keen to join Reunion, which has been developed by ex-CR men. Reunion, like CR, is deeply involved in African gold mining and Mr Cluff, who is 56, admits to being besotted by Africa and its gold potential. Reunion, a Luxembourg-traded share, was introduced to London last month; briefly it touched 83p but has since been to 56p.

Union, the finance group, duly confirmed a shareholder build-up.

Melix Financial, thought to be related to Bahamas-based Joseph Lewis, has moved its interest to 11.2 per cent and there is talk it wants to go to 29.9 per cent.

TAKING STOCK

Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up by 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items. Other details at right: Ex-dividend as Ex or Unadvised Securities Market's Suspended or Partly Paid on full Paid Shares.

The Independent Index

The index allows you to access real-time share prices by phone from Seaq. Simply dial 0891 923 333, followed by the 4-digit code next to each share. To access the latest financial reports dial 0891 923 333 followed by one of the two-digit codes below.

FT-SE 100 - Real-time 00 Sterling Rates 04 Privatization Issues 36
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Foreign Exchange 03 Tokyo Market 21 High Street Banks 41

Anyone with a tone-deaf telephone can use this service. For a detailed description of the Independent Index, including its portfolio facility, phone 0891 923 333. For assistance, call our helpline 071 875 4375 (9.30am - 5.30pm). Calls cost 23p per minute (cheap rate), and 40p at all other times. Call charges include VAT.

Market leaders: Top 20 volumes

Stock	Volume	Stock	Volume	Stock	Volume
National Grid	30,000	BT	50,000	Unilever	60,000
British Airways	20,000	Shell	40,000	British Airways	40,000
British Airways	20,000	Shell	40,000	British Airways	40,000
British Airways	20,000	Shell	40,000	British Airways	40,000

FT-SE 100 index hour by hour

Time	Index	Time	Index	Time	Index
Open 0859	3704.5	11.00	3705.2	13.00	3702.2
09.00	3693.8	12.00	3705.5	14.00	3697.2
10.00	3694.5	13.00	3705.5	15.00	3702.2

Banks, Merchant

Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
Barclays Bank	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
HSBC Bank	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
London & Lancashire	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
NatWest Bank	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5

Banks, Retail

Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
First Direct	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
First Direct	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
First Direct	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
First Direct	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5

Breweries

Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
Asahi Breweries	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Breweries	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Breweries	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Breweries	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5

Building/Construction

Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
Asahi Construction	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Construction	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Construction	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Construction	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5

Building Materials

Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
Asahi Materials	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Materials	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Materials	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Materials	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5

Chemicals

Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
Asahi Chemicals	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Chemicals	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Chemicals	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Chemicals	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5

Distributors

Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
Asahi Distributors	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Distributors	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Distributors	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Distributors	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5

Diversified Industrials

Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
Asahi Industrials	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Industrials	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Industrials	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Industrials	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5

Engineering Vehicles

Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
Asahi Vehicles	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Vehicles	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Vehicles	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Vehicles	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5

Extractive Industries

Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
Asahi Extractives	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Extractives	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Extractives	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Extractives	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5

Food Manufacturers

Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
Asahi Food	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Food	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Food	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Food	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5

Gas Distribution

Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
Asahi Gas	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Gas	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Gas	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Gas	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5

Health Care

Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
Asahi Health	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Health	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Health	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Health	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5

Household Goods

Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
Asahi Goods	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Goods	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Goods	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Goods	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5

Investment Companies

Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
Asahi Investment	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Investment	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Investment	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Investment	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5

Investment Trusts

Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
Asahi Trusts	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Trusts	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Trusts	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Trusts	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5

Life Assurance

Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
Asahi Life	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Life	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Life	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Life	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5

Media

Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
Asahi Media	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Media	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Media	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Media	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5

Printing & Paper

Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
Asahi Paper	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Paper	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Paper	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Paper	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5

Property

Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
Asahi Property	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Property	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Property	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Property	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5

Spirits, Wines & Ciders

Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
Asahi Spirits	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Spirits	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Spirits	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Spirits	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5

Support Services

Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
Asahi Support	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Support	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Support	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Support	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5

Telecommunications

Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
Asahi Telecom	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Telecom	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Telecom	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Telecom	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5

Textiles & Apparel

Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
Asahi Textiles	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Textiles	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Textiles	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Textiles	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5

Transport

Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
Asahi Transport	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Transport	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Transport	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Transport	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5

Water

Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
Asahi Water	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Water	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Water	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Water	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5

Rights Issues

Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
Asahi Rights	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Rights	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Rights	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Rights	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5

Recent Issues

Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
Asahi Recent	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Recent	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Recent	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Recent	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5

Government Securities

Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
Asahi Govt	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Govt	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Govt	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5
Asahi Govt	448.5	+0.5	4.8	12.5

Index-linked

Stock	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
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STERLING

Country

Spot

1 month

2 months

US

15357

15 10

35 32

UK

2277

29 18

53 37

Canada

1273

55 48

54 14

Germany

2235

55 48

54 14

France

775

25 23

25 23

Italy

2523

77 29

77 29

Japan

1222

55 41

57 21

ECU

12254

57 1

57 1

Singapore

437

57 1

57 1

Switzerland

2457

55 41

57 21

Netherlands

2499

53 34

54 1

Holland

2499

53 34

54 1

Belgium

2499

53 34

54 1

Spain

12721

44 53

45 31

Sweden

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Switzerland

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Denmark

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South Africa

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India

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China

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Japan

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South Korea

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2007-11-14

In the old days of terracing, you could simply move away. But with seats, you are stuck, left to imagine what a nightmare it would be to have a season ticket next to him. There was an opportunity, however, to gain revenge. When a long pass from Phil Neville drifted over the Newcastle defence he went apoplectic ("what the bell was that..."). Before he could complete his sentence, though, Keane had picked up what was a brilliant pass and scored. With that kind of spontaneity only seen at football matches, as one the entire row turned round and yelled at him: "waaaaa", we went. If only there had been a photographer there to capture the pleasure on our faces.

Photograph: David Ashdown

His daughter is living in another world. When she finishes her BTech course in

But Danvers has not got to this point in her career without being single-minded, albeit in her consciously relaxed fashion.

do, and I am holding her back at the moment because she has only just turned 18. But she has got plenty of time. I know she will be world class."

ITALY: H. Ragni; R. Gelsiani (coast); H. Ranzani.
 D. Pirelli; A. Ragni; S. Barina; G. Lucca.
 A. Ragni; F. Dubois; S. Breda; G. G. Crini.
 Substitutes: S. Breda, H. Ranzani, L. Delio-
 Nonaghe, A. Leone.

GREAT BRITAIN: L. Luckes (East Grinstead);
 J. Wyeat; R. Gendall; J. Halls (Old Longmoun-
 tains); G. Porthouse (Horsingou), Keltie (Aber-
 Cannock), S. Gendall (Horsingou); C. Mwyer
 (Cannock), R. Kettle (Pole Barnston), R.
 Thompson (Horsingou); J. Luckes (Horsingou-
 tains); C. Thomas (Old Longmoun-
 tains).
 Substitutes: S. Gendall; C. Giles (Horsingou);
 J. Shaw (Southgate), S. Jones (Southgate),
 I. Hall (Gusford).

Umpires: R. Arangino (Italy) and C. Madden
 (Scotland).

lar McKinney's first two shots as an international this week were three-pointers and steered England to a 66-74 win in Denmark on Wednesday night. Tomorrow he turns his sights on Newcastle Comets as the Budweiser league champion St. Bees find Shree, to try to lay in touch with the leaders in London Town.

Frustratingly for England's coach, László Nemeth, McKinney cannot help solve the national team's long-range shooting weakness when they line up against Russia in this season's fifth and final European Championship semi-final round game in Moscow next month.

McKinney is ineligible, not having been in the original list of 22 players named at the

London Towers' Kevin Cadle won the coach of the month award after his club's seven-win unbroken run during December, part of a current 10-0 streak.

Tonight, London are away to Worthing Bears in a rehearsal for next Saturday's League Trophy final at Birmingham. Worthing have problems with their Americans: Derrick Plair has an injured tendon while Steve Paci's form has put his position under threat.

5. Should more prizes be claimed than are available in any prize category, for any reason, a simple draw will take place for the prizes.
6. Persons under 16 years old, employees of Newspaper Publishing plc., Mirror Group European Promotions Ltd, Newspaper Publishing plc retail agents, their agents and families are not allowed to play.
7. The Editors' decisions are final in all matters relating to the games. No correspondence can be entered into.
8. Newspaper Publishing plc reserve the right to stop the game at any time and change the conditions.

هكذا صف الـ صول

Gourmets prepare for Merry feast

A similar comment applies to Barton Bank, whose competent success on his only outing this season must not obscure the memory of his complete loss of form and confidence last term. He fell at Wetherby, Kempton (when clear at the last in the King George) and Cheltenham, and Sandown's obstacles are as demanding as any.

Photograph: Simon Wilkinson

Save the cash for Maj. Summit (1.25) and Storm Ace (12.55), while Easy Buck (2.0) is worth supporting to beat the aging Minnehoma, the 1991 Grand National winner, in Haskell's Newton Chase.

3.35: KALASADI can be forgiven a poor run at Aintree last time.

FORM GUIDE

	1985	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94
Pairs of the favourites:	4	4	2	1	1	1	3	1	3	U
Winners' place in betting:	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	2	0
Starting prices:	12-1	16-1	75-1	1-2	6-6	9-4	10-1	5-6	7-8	76-1
Ages:	10	7	8	9	10	11	6	7	7	8
Profit or loss in 53 places. Favorites: -£1.68. Second favourites: -£7.25										
Percentage of winners placed 1st, 2nd or 3rd in best-year: 50%										
Shortest-priced winner: Desert Orchid 1.2 (1988)										
Longest-priced winner: Napsala 25-1 (1987)										
Top trainers: F Dumeun - Napsala (1987), The Fellow (1981, 1992), Algon (1994)										
D Emery - Desert Orchid (1986, 1988, 1989, 1990)										
Top jockeys: S Sherwood - Desert Orchid (1986, 1988)										
R Duncroft - Desert Orchid (1989, 1990)										
A Bordon - The Fellow (1991, 1992)										

Note: U = Unsuccessful ride; 21 = just-second favourite.

sport

Kendall finds respite in Wembley dreams

The Blades' manager talks to Glenn Moore about two decades of FA Cup memories



The FA Cup third round is one of football's most evocative occasions. In deep mid-winter, with most of autumn's ambitions reduced to fantasy, the season is regenerated. Small clubs seek a giant-killing, big ones are revived by the prospect of another trophy to play for. And everyone remembers the good times past.

Few will recall such a range as Howard Kendall, and few will do so in such an appropriate setting. When Kendall takes his Sheffield United team to face Arsenal at Highbury today he will roll back a dozen years on the clock. Then he might go back 20 more, to 1964, when he was 17.

At an age when most football fans have not even been to Wembley Kendall was out there playing, in the FA Cup final. He was then the youngest-ever Wembley final-

'Experiencing three finals in a row was unbelievable'

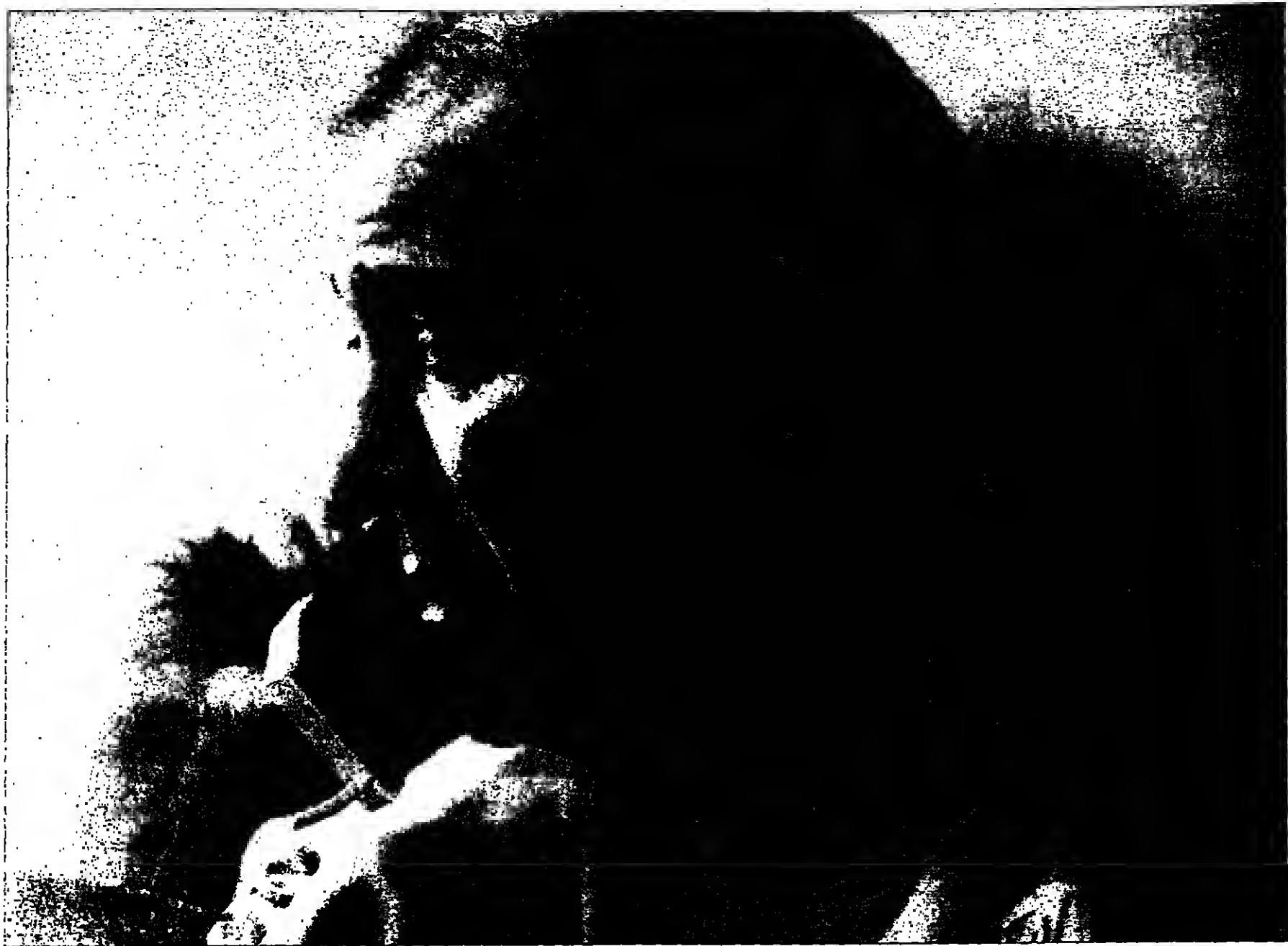
ist. His Preston team lost - to West Ham. Four years later Kendall was on the losing side again, as Everton lost to West Bromwich Albion. He never did gain a winners' medal, just as, surprisingly, he never won an England cap.

But he did win at Wembley, in 1984, when Everton beat Watford to earn Kendall his first trophy as a manager. Winning the final, with Watford overawed, was the easy part. It is the semi-final, which was played at Highbury, which sticks in Kendall's mind and is the reason today will be replete with memories.

Everton, who had not been to an FA Cup final since that 1968 defeat, met Southampton. No one scored until, with three minutes of extra time left, 5ft 6in Adrian Heath rose in front of the North Bank to head the only goal.

Four months earlier Everton fans had been calling for Kendall's dismissal. In the next three years they went on to win that year's FA Cup, two League titles, and the European Cup-Winners' Cup.

Heath is now assistant manager



It's good to talk: Howard Kendall discusses transfer deals on the phone in his office at Bramall Lane

Photograph: Simon Wilkinson

at Sheffield United and Kendall said, "going back to Highbury will be special for me and Adrian. That was my first trophy and you always remember the first one. It was very important to me. They cannot take it away from you if you are manager of a club which won the FA Cup final."

"It was also the first trophy for Everton for a long time [14 years], and it meant European football again, which was so important to the club." Everton went on to reach the next two finals and Kendall added: "Experiencing three finals in a row was unbelievable. To win three semi-finals on the trot is a tremendous feeling."

Back in 1964 Kendall had not expected to play in the final. Then Ian

Davison, the regular half-back, was suspended by the club. Davison had been given permission to take the previous match off to attend a funeral in Edinburgh, instead he had assisted a family friend with personal problems. Jimmy Milne, the manager, objected to being misled and Kendall was in.

He recently saw the game on video but admitted: "I remember very little of it. I think the other players shielded me from it. They were more concerned that I settled than with being nervous themselves. My main aim was not to make any horrific mistakes which would cost us on the day. Thankfully I played quite well."

A contemporary newspaper report said of Kendall: "The Sunday school organist... defying the label

of 'youngest-ever Cup finalist', hit another long one which [Bobby] Moore cleared edgily away. Not a trace of nerves in this boy."

As that report suggests, at the time Kendall, at 17 years, 345 days, was thought to be the youngest FA Cup finalist ever. Thus, when Paul Allen played for West Ham in 1980, at 17 years, 256 days, it was thought that honour passed to him.

However, while researching his comprehensive *The Guinness Record of the FA Cup* Mike Collett found that Indian-born James Priest, of 1879 finalists Clapham Rovers, was 11 days younger than Allen. The most recent teenager was Chris Bart-Williams, who was 18 when playing for Sheffield Wednesday in 1993.

Kendall still was - and Allen is - the youngest Wembley finalist. Kendall, displaying an unexpected interest in numerology, added: "Paul was 16 years after me, and that was 16 years ago, so if it goes in sequence maybe the record will be broken this year. It was a long time ago. Someone said to me the other day: 'Wasn't that the Cup final when the white horse came on?'"

At which point Heath, coming into Kendall's spacious office with a cup of coffee, interjects, "no, it was the year before."

Heath, 35 next Thursday, may play today. "There is more than a possibility that he will be involved, but he is unlikely to start," Kendall said yesterday. "Even if he just sits when the white horse comes for both of us."

As Kendall has been in charge at Sheffield United for only 23 days the match represents a daunting test of his early rebuilding.

"It is nice to get a big game," he said, "but we could have done with an easier one. It is a tremendous opportunity. I have made a few changes since I came here. I believe I have brought in some Premier League players, and inherited some. They will have the chance on Saturday to prove it to me."

So far Kendall has brought in six players - David White (Leeds), Michel Vonk (Manchester City), Gordon Cowans (Wolves), Mark Patterson (Bolton), Chris Short (Notts County), and brother of Everton's Craig and Heath (Barnley), Viv Busby, who regularly reminds Kendall about the 1975 FA Cup semi-final,

when his Fulham side beat Kendall's Birmingham, has joined as coach. Three players, including Nathan Blake, have left. The deals have realised £500,000 profit. According to reports, which Kendall will not comment on, that could be earmarked for Niall Quinn or Ian Rush.

It is not just the team which needs rebuilding. Viewed from the touchline on the John Street side Bramall Lane looks an impressive, if dated, arena by First Division standards. From the other touchline there is a very different vista, that of the roofs and spires of Sheffield - the John Street stand was demolished in mid-1994 and is yet to be replaced. Bramall Lane has thus, inadvertently, reverted to the three-sided look of its cricket days. The result, said previous manager Dave Bassett, "is a poxy atmosphere."

Bassett left the Blades, exhausted, in early December. Having taken United from Third Division to First/Premier, and kept them there for four years, he was shattered when they were relegated by the last goal of the season in May 1994. Last season was disappointing and now they are one from bottom in the First Division. Years of under-investment, in ground and team, have taken their toll.

Leaving with Bassett was the man he had been battling with for more funds for years, Reg Brealey. The unpopular chairman has been re-

'It is nice to get a big game but we could have done with an easier one'

placed by Mike McDonald and the ground should now be restored to four sides. Money, however, remains tight, a large notice by the franchising machine orders: "Only essential post to go first-class." The club have to train on the Bramall Lane pitch and this interview is interrupted while Kendall haggles about a few thousand pounds on a transfer deal.

Kendall has been in management for 17 years, from Everton and Notts County to Spain and Greece. "The demands have grown. It is more of a financial disaster if clubs are relegated. Every chairman is saying the same thing: 'We want you to come in and do a long-term job. We have great plans. And, by the way, we cannot go down.' Somebody has to."

Kendall's brief is to ensure that it is not Sheffield United. Today, though, he and his team can forget about the league's struggles and dream of Wembley. It may be 60 years since Sheffield United have played in an FA Cup final, but somebody has to get there.

Robson and Wright abandon fate to FA

Bryan Robson has decided not to make a personal appearance to defend himself over his clash with the referee Paul Danson, while Ian Wright has apologised "unreservedly" for criticising leading referees and left his fate to the FA disciplinary panel.

Robson, the Middlesbrough player-manager, has been charged with disrepute by the Football Association along with the club's captain, Nigel Pearson, and defender Neil Cox following the incident at the end of their defeat at Blackburn on 16 December. The trio have sent statements explaining their actions, but none has asked for a personal hearing.

Alan Shearer has already been cleared by the Crown Prosecution Service for alleged gestures at Boro after scoring the only goal of the game for Blackburn.

Wright, the Arsenal striker, fears he has become a target for referees this season with eight bookings, the last two in successive matches since he described them as "like little Hitler's".

Wright could escape punishment after showing contrition when asked to explain his com-

ments by the FA. "The matter will go before a disciplinary commission next week when they will decide what action - if any - will be taken," an FA spokesman said.

Paul Gascoigne has landed a two-match ban later this month. The Rangers midfielder's latest ban is results from his involvement in the infamous 11 November match with Aberdeen at Ibrox. He was given a one-match suspension after escaping action by the match referee, John Rowbottom, and having 12 disciplinary points put against his name after a special hearing by the Scottish Football Association.

Now yellow cards in his last two matches have taken the sum over the 16-point threshold for the second time since arriving from Lazio last summer.

West Ham have taken Peter Shilton, the former England goalkeeper, on a month's loan as cover for Luděk Mikuláško. Ajax have signed winger Peter Hoekstra from PSV Eindhoven to help cover for the injured Marc Overmars, who is not expected to play again this season after injuring his knee. The fee is around £2m.

Milan make their pitch for the title

Milan restart their Italian league title chase after the Christmas break with a re-turfed San Siro pitch and a one-point lead over second-placed Fiorentina.

The league leaders, who entertain Sampdoria tomorrow, have drawn their last two home games against Napoli and Torino.

On both occasions the Milan coach Fabio Capello argued that the poor condition of the pitch had handicapped his side's attacking game.

Milan's strikeforce against Sampdoria will be led by the newly crowned European Footballer of the Year, George Weah, flanked by Roberto Baggio and Marco Simone.

Dejan Savicevic is not yet fully fit and he will be replaced by Zvonimir Boban in midfield alongside Marcel Desailly and Demetrio Albertini.

For the second time this season Sampdoria turn to a second-choice goalkeeper in 21-year-old Matteo Sereni. The regular keeper Angelo Pagotto, who is to undergo a knee cartilage operation, originally came into the side at the start of the season following an injury to former Italian international Walter Zenga.

Fiorentina travel to face in-form Roma, who beat champions Juventus 2-0 in Turin on the final day of 1995.

This match brings together two Swedish midfielders, Jonas Thern of Roma and Stefan Schwarz of Fiorentina who began their professional careers together at Swedish club Malmö.

Thern argues that Fiorentina's successful season owes a lot to Schwarz. "He's an inspirational figure on the field, a player who always wants to win, who never gives up," he said.

"If this year's Fiorentina are a much improved side, much of that is because of Schwarz's arrival."

Schwarz, in his first season in Italian football since moving from Arsenal, is unconcerned about playing against his old friend.

"For me, it'll be just another game. There are no special games or opponents," he said.

The game also provides an Argentine derby in attack where Fiorentina look to Gabriel Batistuta, leading marksman on the 10-goal mark, and Roma to Abel Balbo. Both sides will be at full strength.

The champions Juventus, currently fifth six points behind Mi-

lan, travel to Bergamo to face Atalanta, the side who knocked them out of the Italian Cup in October.

Juventus coach Marcello Lippi may drop Fabrizio Ravanelli in attack, recalling Alessandro Del Piero who was rested for two games prior to the Christmas break.

Atalanta will look to the experience of their Uruguayan defender Jose Herrera and Paolo Montero to contain Juventus.

Parma, three points behind Milan in third place, recall Bulgarian Hristo Stoichkov to partner Gianfranco Zola in attack for their difficult away clash with Torino.

Parma will be penalised by the absence of midfielder Massimo Crippa and defender Fabio Cannavaro, both suspended, while Torino will also be without a key player in the suspended Ghanaian Abedi Pele.

Athletic Madrid are hoping that the absence of two top players this weekend will not affect the form that has given them a seven-point lead at the top of the Spanish first division.

Athletic will be without Spanish internationals Jose Luis Camarero and Kiko Narvaez for the home match against mid-

table Tenerife, while rivals Barcelona and Espanyol face more difficult games.

Camarero, who picked up a yellow card in Wednesday's 3-1 win at Salamanca, and Narvaez, who limped off with an ankle injury, have been key figures in Athletic's revival this season.

The absence of Narvaez, who could be out for four weeks - will probably mean the debut of striker Juan Carlos Gomez, while Camarero's place in midfield will be filled by Roberto Fresnedoso, who has come on as substitute in several games this season.

Sitting on their lead, Atletico are already assured of reaching the halfway stage in the championship in top spot with two games still to play.

Curiously coach Radomir Anic's impressive record - won 14, drawn three, lost two - is identical to that he had when he was dismissed from Real Madrid in January 1992.

Real lost that league title, and have not done much to suggest they can take this year's championship.

Currently 12 points off the pace in sixth, Real desperately need to win away at Merida if they are to retain the league.

With teenage forward Raul Gonzalez injured, coach Jorge Valdano is likely to turn to Jose Amavisca to add fire-power up front.

Second-placed Barcelona travel to Celta Vigo without midfielders Ivan de la Pena and Roger Garcia, who picked up red and yellow cards respectively in Thursday's last-minute 2-1 victory over Espanyol.

Johan Cruyff's team were flattered by that result and will have to pull out all the stops at Celta, who showed their class with a 3-0 mid-week win away at high-flying Real Betis.

Espanyol - who trail Barcelona only on goal average - face a tough game at home to fifth-placed Valencia whose Brazilian World Cup star Viola is finally beginning to find his form after a shaky start to the season.

Athletic Bilbao take on Real Sociedad in the Basque derby looking for their 900th victory in the first division. After dominating Spanish football in the early 1980s both clubs are currently in the doldrums, with Athletic in 10th and Sociedad in 13th place. It all points to a vital weekend in the race to be crowned the kings of Spain.

Nicholas on trail of more Cup goals

Charlie Nicholas - who won a winners' medal with Aberdeen in 1990 - begins yet another Tennent's Scottish Cup campaign today.

The 34-year-old former Scottish international, who also played for Celtic and Arsenal, turns out for Second Division Clyde in their home second-round tie against Brechin City, from the Third Division. However, Alex Smith, the manager of the Cumbernauld-based side, is unlikely to repeat the Cup wins he enjoyed when in charge of St Mirren (1987) and Aberdeen (1990).

Another player with Cup final experience involved today is the new Ayr United manager, Gordon Dalziel, who leads the Second Division club at home to Ross County, from the Third. At least two non-League clubs will figure in the third-round draw: Deveronvale entertain their neighbours, Keith, while another Highland League club, Fraserburgh, visit Whitehill Welfare, of the East of Scotland League.

That I elected instead to lend my vocal support to the terraces of Kenilworth Road showed early and unsettling signs of perversity

As a Jewish kid reared in the north London suburb of Hendon, the options for the rookie football fan were simple - Stamford Bridge (quite Jewish), Highbury (very Jewish), or White Hart Lane (a veritable synagogue on match day).

That I elected instead to lend my vocal support to the terraces of Kenilworth Road showed early and unsettling signs of perversity, and perhaps gave a clue to the years of therapy that were to follow.

In short, I wanted to be different and, let's face it, when you're growing up in the ghettos north of Golders

Green Road, Luton is about as different as you can get.

If the truth be told, and tell me if this is not perversity itself in a town where Vauxhall looms larger than God, Luton are probably the most Jewish club of the lot, the Red Sea of Kenilworth Road parting at various times to engulf a Jewish chairman, Jewish manager, and that most exotic of species, a Jewish player - respectively David Kohler, David Pleat, and the much travelled and largely forgotten Barry Silkman, journeyman ball-juggler who graced our

midfield for a few brief games

between spells at nine other clubs, including Crystal Palace and Manchester City.

Silkman was a contemporary of Kevin Keegan with, arguably, less natural ability than the great man, but an infinitely better perm. Legend has it that, on asking his hairdresser for highlights, Silkman was shown an action replay of his last haircut.

Kohler's main claim to fame, apart from the where, withal to win any number of Rodney Bewes lookalike competitions, is his obsession with what he calls his Kohlerdome, an all-singing, all-dancing, all-

FAN'S EYE VIEW

No 131
Luton Town
PETER MOSS

purpose arena replete with moveable pitch and retractable roof, at a cost that could fund 10 decades of French nuclear testing in the south Pacific.

You would think this was the dream of a man at the helm of a wealthy club. You would be wrong. For Kohler's policy as regards players seems to be:

"Can he kick with both feet? Yes? Right, sell him. We need the money!" Phil Gray, Paul Telfer, Iain Dowie, Mick Harford and John Harrison are just some of the Luton alumni currently finding the net in higher circles. The result? We are left with a team in which my late grandmother,

aided only by her frame and a few puffs of Ventolin, would not look out of place.

Not the pre-war nostalgia of Joe Payne, 10 goals in one game against Bristol Rovers, a League record that stands to this very day and may never be bettered in these days of twin centre-backs and goalless draws.

Nor the decade of my birth, when the Birmingham-Baynham-Owen team of 1959 took us to the FA Cup final, only to lose to the 11 men of Nottingham Forest, (11 men we can beat, but 10 we can't). Our spare player gets confused by the ex-

tra space and falls down quite a lot).

No. What I hanker after is a deal more recent. The team of 1987/88, the team of nine internationals, fashioned by Pleat, inherited by Ray Harford, and managed once again by the Jewish boy whose manic Irish jig on defeating Manchester City with the last kick of the 1982/83 season to preserve our top-flight status was a sight never to be forgotten and still much beloved by television pundits and video playback fans.

Hang it all, the team that came from 2-1 down with min-

utes left to defeat the might of Arsenal and lift the League Cup (or whatever they called it then) not eight years ago. Glory days, when capacity crowds would grace the Nissen hut that masquerades as our stadium. How different today when the one policeman that patrols outside the ground does so for the sole purpose of throwing people in.

But Luton are my team, handed down by God on Mount Sinai, and they'll be my team until death, or a particularly lucrative takeover bid, do us part.

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Lynagh: Record holder

Rugby Union
STEVE BALE

Saracens will complete a transfer coup on Monday when they are expected to unveil the Australian stand-off Michael Lynagh, the international record points-scorer, as English rugby's most significant signing so far for next season.

The ambitious north London

club, now backed by the millionaire businessman Nigel Wray, have been in conversation with Philippe Sella, the most-capped Frenchman, who wishes to spend a year in England. The Ireland flanker Eddie Halvey has also signed.

Yesterday Saracens called a press conference for Monday at a fashionable watering-hole in London's West End with the message "Miss it and you'll

be sorry", though the nature of the impending announcement was not disclosed. Lynagh, who is married to an Italian, has been under contract to Benetton Treviso, who gave a good account of themselves in a European Cup match against Toulouse last month.

Though at 32 he is in the autumn of his career and retired from international rugby after leading Australia in last year's

World Cup, Lynagh - like the 33-year-old Sella - would have an immense amount to offer Saracens not simply as a player but in coaching and development.

One thing he should rectify is Sarries' chronic place-lacking, his record for the Wallabies of 911 points in 72 Tests from 1984-95 being 266 more than anyone else has achieved.

Ireland's players will receive

at least £3,000 for every international appearance during the 1995-96 season. The 21-member squad will receive a match fee of around £1,000 and a further £2,000 will be paid to those who actually play. Players will also get a £1,000 bonus for a win in the Five Nations' Championship. The 30 members of the extended international squad will also receive a retainer of £7,500.

The breakdown in old barriers occasioned by rugby union's professionalisation will have its most remarkable expression with the likely appearance of the Rugby League champions, Wigan, in the Middlesex Sevens in May. In another striking development, the Rugby Football Union has enquired whether it could enter an England team.

The new Lomu?, page 24

Saracens prepare to unveil Lynagh

FA CUP THIRD ROUND: Premiership elite facing a weekend of fear and choking. Phil Shaw reports

Humble brethren poised to pounce

Two national lotteries will dominate conversation this weekend. In the version better known as the FA Cup, those who roll over supposedly superior opposition tend to view the jackpot in emotional rather than financial terms.

The delirious few who combine both aspects traditionally do it in the third round, where 63 members of what is now the Premiership have bowed to humbler brethren over the past two decades. Most of the elite have suffered such a humiliation - Manchester United at Bournemouth and Arsenal at Wrexham being classic examples - with six victims in both 1979 and '92 and only 1981 failing to produce an upset.

So the chances, statistically speaking, are that as many as three Premiership casualties will join the losers of tomorrow's Chelsea-Newcastle tie in being left to the time-honoured pursuit of "concentrating on the League". The numbered balls certainly did their bit to enhance romance: 11 top-flight teams visit lower-division territory, among them the current bottom four.

The Premiership giants with most to fear, however, may be Leeds, whose FA Cup record over those 20 years has been largely wretched: two semi-finals but only one other run beyond the last 32. Tomorrow they visit Derby, where they won in a friendly and a Coca-Cola Cup tie earlier this season, before the First Division leaders started their present surge of nine wins in 10 games.

In similar circumstances 12 months ago it took an 87th-minute equaliser to save Leeds' skin - and possibly Howard Wilkinson's job - at Walsall. Now his tenure could again come under threat for, if Derby's run continues, Leeds' entire season will be resting on the outcome of the Coca-Cola semi-final at home to Reading on Wednesday. And by then, Tony Yeboah will be with the Ghanaian squad in South Africa.

In terms of a disparity in league places, Aston Villa have far more to lose than Leeds, although Gravesend & North-

fleet, 126 rungs below them, surely relinquished what slender chance they had of winning when they agreed to switch to Villa Park. The Beazer Homes League stragglers, whose consolation will be a profit of around £100,000, at least seem intent on going out in style.

Chris Weller, who works in a prison when he is not managing the part-timers, promises all-out attack. His opposite number, Brian Little, often recalls that the most stressful day of his managerial career came at Welling, Gravesend's Kentish neighbours, when he was on the brink of leading Darlington out of the Vauxhall Conference. Little admitted yesterday: "As it gets closer you think 'Crikey, what if we lose'."

The answer is that it would rank among the great Cup shocks of all time, alongside such feats as Hereford, then of the Southern League, overcoming Newcastle, of the former First Division, in 1972. The only other non-League survivors, Woking, appear to have a better chance at Swindon. "If they don't beat us," the Conference club's manager, Geoff Chapple, said in a piece of blatant Cup kidology, "then something's badly wrong."

While the prospects of today's Hereford totalling Tottenham look slim, the Third Division's 15th-placed team are at least on their own paddy-field of dreams. In Nicky Cross and Steve White they also have a strike force with a combined age of 72 - a latter-day Ronnie Radford and



In charge: Graham Turner (right), the Hereford United manager, training with his team yesterday. Today the Third Division side entertain Tottenham Hotspur at Edgar Street in the third round of the FA Cup

Ricky George, perhaps - who have sufficient guile to keep that young upstart Gary Mabbutt on his 34-year-old toes.

One of the Premiership sides most at risk, Coventry, take a bizarre record to Plymouth, having lifted the Cup in 1987 yet lost to the likes of Sutton, Northampton and Cambridge United in only twice advancing beyond the fourth round in the other 19 of the past 20 seasons.

Third top in the First meet third bottom in the Premier as Leicester receive Manchester City in a re-run of the 1969 final: Queen's Park Rangers head for Tranmere aware that their hosts are stronger than Stockport, who put them out at this stage two years ago; and Bolton, with Ian Porterfield, Sunderland's Wembley hero in 1973, taking his first match as coach, are on a hiding to nothing at Bradford City.

Sunderland, now reviving splendidly under Peter Reid, may be catching last year's beaten finalists, Manchester United, at a good time. Everton, the holders, should come through at home to Stockport, while across Stanley Park the main point of interest may be whether Liverpool give Ian Rush MBE the opportunity to score the goal against Rochdale that would take him

past Denis Law's competition record of 41.

Blackburn's barren away sequence must give Ipswich, 5-1 winners in their last home fixture, hope at Portman Road. Nor will Sheffield United travel to Arsenal in quite the trepidation they might have felt when the draw was made. Since then, Howard Kendall has revamped the Bramall Lane line-up and the Gunners

have lost three of their last four matches.

There will be no love lost at Southampton, where Portsmouth drop in on the neighbours, or at Birmingham, to whom Wolves make an even shorter journey, though the most intriguing "derby" is that between the Holdsworth twins, David, of Watford, marks Dean, of Wimbledon, for the first time in a competitive game.

Glenn Roeder, who now manages Watford but has played with both, said: "You only have to speak to them to know who's the centre-half and who's the centre-forward. David's a sensible, serious lad whereas Dean's a bouncy and flamboyant character." Come tonight, unless it is a draw at Vicarage Road, you will only have to look at them to know who has won.

Kendall's Wembley dream, Cup team news, page 26

Millwall pull off coup by signing a pair of Russians

ROB DORSETT

Millwall yesterday pulled off one of the transfer coups of the season, when they secured the services of two of the Russians who put paid to Blackburn Rovers' hopes in the Champions' League. The striker Serguei Yuran and defender-cum-midfielder Vassili Kulkov have joined on loan for the remainder of the season, with the First Division club retaining

an option to purchase the duo thereafter.

The internationals, who have played in every Spartak Moscow game this season, have mirrored each other's career paths exactly, through five years and four European clubs. An indicator of their ability is that, during their time there, every club they have played for has won a national championship.

Yuran, 26, scored the winning goal against Blackburn in this year's Champions League, hav-

ing tormented the Arsenal defence when he played for Benfica in the European Cup four years ago. He has a fiancée living in London, while the 29-year-old Kulkov's wife and daughter are expected to arrive here shortly. "My fiancée living here was a factor," Yuran said, "but I came here to show good football and to help Millwall win promotion."

The pair were recommended to Millwall by Bobby Robson, for whom they played at

Porto last season. Negotiations have lasted three weeks, and it is an indication of the relative financial strengths of the two countries that the pair could be persuaded to leave the Russian champions to play in England outside the Premiership.

Millwall, who have slipped to 11th having led the division earlier in the season, will hope the signings prove a turning point for their season. "Their presence in the squad is bound to give supporters, players and

everyone a lift," Mick McCarthy, the Millwall manager, said.

"My goal is to win promotion, and the signing of two world-class players can only help to achieve that goal." The pair will both be available for the visit of Port Vale a week today.

Peter Mead, the club's chairman, admitted that the Bosman verdict made the signings much easier. Millwall now have five foreigners on their pay-roll.

England look to rebuild their morale

Cricket

England's World Cup hopes are getting an early opportunity to rebuild team morale after South Africa won the Test series 1-0 with a 10-wicket victory in the final Test which finished a day early this week.

Virtually a new-look England will take the field in Cape Town today for a 50-over contest against Western Province.

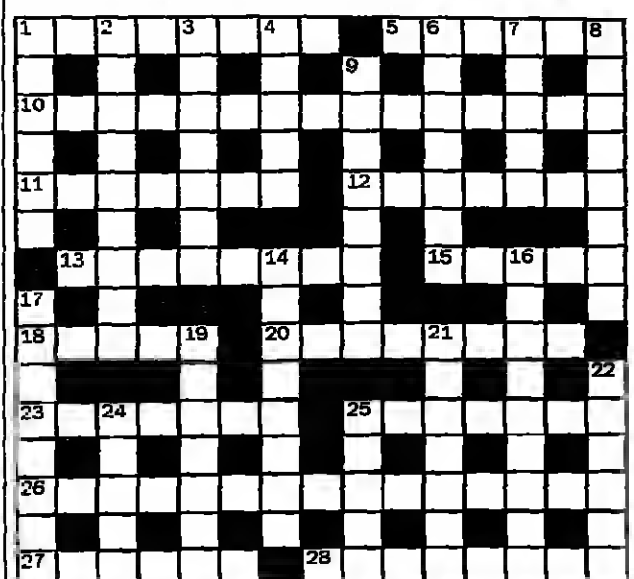
Neil Fairbrother, Dermot Reeve, Neil Smith, Phil DeFreitas and Craig White arrived this week to take over from Jason Gallian, Mark Flint, John Crawley, Devon Malcolm and Angus Fraser for the one-day series against South Africa which begins in Cape Town on Tuesday. The spinner Richard Illingworth who missed the Test through injury, is still not expected to be fit today but the batsman Mark Ramprakash and the fast bowler Darren Gough are two other players from the original tour squad who still harbour World Cup hopes.

Atherton's verdict, page 23

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 2876, Saturday 6 January

By Mass



The first five correct solutions to this week's puzzle opened next Thursday receive hardbacked copies of the excellent Chambers Biographical Dictionary, worth £35. Answers and winners' names will be published next Saturday. Send solutions to Saturday Crossword, P.O. Box 4018, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5BL. Please use the box number and postcode. Last week's winners were: Mrs G Seagrave, Bristol; Mrs A Donovan, West Sussex; Mr R Scalle, North Humberside; G Glover, London EC2V; Bob Mastin, Middlesbrough.

ACROSS

- 1 One attending a meeting (6)
- 5 ... to agree to enter office (6)
- 10 Frank's in front on the home stretch (15)
- 11 Bird (duck) in list (7)
- 12 Ranting? Could be subtler (7)
- 13 Union contract? Break one in anger (8)
- 15 Best of people, literally (5)
- 18 Carry first of medals, symbol evoking respect (5)
- 20 Establish film sequence on part of ship (4,4)
- 23 Bit of a nut, they say, this officer (7)
- 25 Epicure's cut fleshy fruit (paid for) (7)
- 26 An elder goes in EO - could be this one (3,3,9)
- 27 Dull day, back end of July (6)
- 28 Ship reportedly helps to deliver army units (8)

Friday's solution

SANGUITY HOWDAH
CATHY VIE
OUTREAGER GENSOR
UNDOES EPPS
HESITATE A
STAGGERING
BUT FORT
GROUNDBERY
UNDOES EPPS
ROTIC BEASTIES
BMASSA
ENTIGMA AUSTRIAN
LNAOOR
LIVING INUNDATING

DOWN

- 1 Repair to Blackpool? (6)
- 2 Bird caught by storm circling wild moor (9)
- 3 Grand sedan in show (7)
- 4 One subtracted from one or the other to give this number (5)
- 6 Rev's beginning to cause a stir (7)
- 7 Faithful? Divorcee's given decree (5)
- 8 Rod needs changes to be sanctioned (8)
- 9 Bad fracture? It could put one out! (3-5)
- 14 Stake with bound animal (8)
- 16 Fashion model with line that's unpromising (3-6)
- 17 Cuts up girl student, getting plastered (8)
- 19 Supervisor, a German, in new organisation (7)
- 21 Accommodation? A sprinkling round University (7)
- 22 Birds of prey, it's said, beginning to swoop (6)
- 24 Guided, say, over ridge (5)
- 25 Greek possessed by a person's lost soul (5)

Last Saturday's solution

ALLEGORIC AMOEBA
ATTEMPT
AOMONISH ASCEND
IBASSING
SRODOLIA
CLAPPDROIT
ATPAAANE
GROUNDBERY
UNDOES EPPS
ROTIC BEASTIES
BMASSA
ENTIGMA AUSTRIAN
LNAOOR
LIVING INUNDATING

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